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\$500 REWARD!  
LOST!  
DECEMBER 25TH!

By OCTAVE THANET.  
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because, but for this window a little girl of three, in the daintiest furred long coat, with a mop of spun gold rings tumbled over the gray fur and blue cloth, would not have stopped to admire its splendors and the patient Swede girl with her, would not have coaxed her in vain.

Miss Celia looked at the child with a friendly smile. Spinster as she is who has passed more than one birthday in the forties, there is no living woman with a warmer heart for children. Besides, had she not her own little boy waiting for her at home? poor Eliza's child left to her with Eliza's diamonds and a pretty legacy, five years ago.

Eliza was the beauty of the Wilder family, Celia's own sister; she had been married in Washington, (when Gen. Wilder was in Congress) to a rich New Yorker with weak lungs, who could not live at home. There, Eliza held court for ten years; not forgetful of her sister who visited her regularly every winter. Then came a last sad winter; Eliza and her husband died within four months of each other, and the poor little rich boy was left to his aunt. It was six years ago. Rex was only a baby; and the wrench and shock had somehow been outlived, for "the strong years conquer us"; but Celia's faithful heart often ached yet. She had taken the pretty, delicate, little creature and reared him with much love and some tears lest she should miss the best course for a boy. If only her father had lived! Celia believed her father the noblest of men and a great statesman. She had been his friend, his confidant, his private secretary, and his never faltering worshipper. For his sake, she who had been a handsome girl and was a distinguished looking woman, had never married, in spite of many lovers.

After his death, she lived alone in the old house that her father had left her, and dined with the family portraits, until Rex came. Remembering Rex now, she smiled again on the little girl, saying, in her gentle, high-bred voice:

"Do you want something in here, dearie?"

"I want to do in and talk to Santa Claus," said the little lady very composedly. "My mamma did talk to Santa Clause—one day in a store."

"Sie must go home," the maid interposed, "we must take car; Mrs. Brace, sie not like it."

Miss Wilder's face changed at the name; and her hand dropped off the little shoulder. She said coldly that a car was coming and without making any further remark, turned and went up the hill; too absorbed in some sudden thought to remember her

book, or even to notice Mrs. Rollins who had come up puffing a little with "The Crime of Sylvestre Bonard."

Mrs. Rollins was a little plump, white woman, with pretty toilets and a lisp. She appeared soft, timid, and possibly a silly dove; but she was sufficiently acute. The Reverend Thaddeus Graves Rollins, her husband, was rector of the parish to which Miss Wilder liberally subscribed. She went every Sunday, twice a day to church, she attended the week day services in Lent; but she did not belong to the church. Why? That is what Mrs. Rollins was telling Mrs. Dubarry, the librarian, while Miss Celia tramped more and more swiftly up the hill.

"She hurried off so quick that I couldn't make her hear," said Mrs. Rollins between pants, unloosening her sealskin.

"Why, I saw her talking to Mrs. Brace's little girl only a minute ago," said Mrs. Dubarry, a stranger in the place; a reserved, dark woman who had known enough hardship and turmoil to be thankful for this quiet harbor.

"Ah, that was it, Betty," (Mrs. Dubarry was an old friend of the rector's wife.) "I do believe she didn't know when then somebody told her."

"Know what, Janet?"

"Know her own niece. That child is Miss Wilder's niece."

"Why shouldn't she know her?"

"Well, it is a longish story, and the placard says 'Do not talk!' you know."

"Oh, certainly, perhaps we would better not," said Mrs. Dubarry timidly with a thought for the Board of Trustees and the mites at home, and how much the salary meant to her.

"There's nobody here," said Mrs. Rollins who stood in less awe of the Trustees, knowing them better. "I think here is about the only place that isn't crowded. Well, you might as well know, Betty, because otherwise, Miss Celia is here so much and all, you might put your foot in with a stray question. It is this way. You know Miss Celia's father was General Wilder. He had a regiment in the war and was breveted General and was our member of Congress until he died; would have been our senator if he had lived. Miss Celia thought him the greatest man on earth. Well, General Wilder had two wives; it is to be supposed he got along comfortably with the first one, (Celia's mother.)

She died when Celia was fifteen, and he married again, which I have been told, Celia took very hard.

Whether it was her step-mother's fault or hers they

were not happy. The step-mother was a handsome creature, very gay and fond of admiration; the husband was absorbed in politics, he was used to his

daughter's sympathy and to being considered a demi-god; his wife didn't bow down and worship him as he was accustomed to be treated; she was waiting to be worshipped herself. The result was, they quarreled. There was one child, a girl, she was ten years old and Celia about twenty-eight when the crash came and the pair separated; exactly why, nobody knows, but there was plenty of gossip. The little girl went with her mother and from that day to this Celia has never had a word to say to her sister."

"But don't you think that hard?" said Mrs. Dubarry, "you know the child naturally would cling to its mother."

"Oh, that wasn't the whole story. As the girl grew up, her father wanted to see her and she sided with her mother and wouldn't see him, and it was very horrid indeed! They do say that he sent for her when he was dying and she wouldn't come, I don't know."

"Did he leave her any property?" said Mrs. Dubarry, who poor soul was so poor, that she could not help considering money any more than she could help breathing.

"Yes, that was the odd part of it. He left her almost as much as he left Celia."

"And she is rich!"

"Why, I suppose Celia must have two hundred thousand."

"What became of the mother?"

"She went to Europe."

"And the daughter?"

"She married too, and has come here to live, you know her, it is Mrs. Brace."

"And that was her daughter?"

"Yes, her only child. It does seem a wicked thing for two sisters to be living within a stone's throw of each other and never speaking."

"And if they meet, what do they do?"

"Nothing, pass each other like strangers. Once they were together at a church sociable and someone tried to introduce them."

"Mercy! What did they do?"

"Miss Celia drew herself up and said: 'I must decline to know Mrs. Brace—like that, and turned on her heel; while Mrs. Brace went all sorts of colors. I was told that she

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## Chapter I.

MISS CELIA WILDER did not stop at the public library, as her custom was, on her way up the hill. Yet she had intended to stop. Though it was the day before Christmas, and Miss Celia was loaded with bundles she still had enough loose silver in her pocket to pay her passage in the electric car that creaked and whirred up the hill past her, a red blur in the winter dusk; crammed like a beehive; however, she would not ride, she would walk and go into the library for the "Crime of Sylvestre Bonard," to be finished and left there for her to-day, by Mrs. Rollins.

Indeed, she did walk as far as the library, and paused outside the door. The library is a thin, high brick building, with an unhappy accident of a tower on one side; but Miss Celia admired it, because her father had given it to the town. She looked, now, with a sentiment approaching to fondness on the great oaken doors and the little shops which flared in front. One shop was a milliner's and the other a confectioner's; and in the latter window was a glitter of iced cakes and sugar forms, all under the eye of a Santa Claus uprearing a Christmas tree.

Had there not been this window Miss Celia would have gone in for her book;



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Celia is obstinate. You've heard about her wanting to join the church—no, of course you haven't; well, she did, and came to Tad about it; and he told her that she must first be reconciled to her sister."

"Was she willing?"

"No, she wouldn't join the church. I was afraid she would go to the Cathedral or even to some other denomination; I wanted Tad to be a little kind to her; but you know what he is about what he calls matters of principle; no, he wouldn't yield a jot; quoted things out of the Bible. Well, he was right; but I can't look at things quite so independently. And she gives three hundred dollars a year. But she made no difference at all; went to church and subscribed just the same. Why, Betty, it is half past five—time for us both to go."

Long before they went, Miss Celia had climbed the little space between the library building and her house. The house was a large square house, the roof of which for apex had a cupola. In front of the house was a wide veranda and it was set far back in a deep lawn and old fashioned garden where the chrysanthemums were only a little done blooming. By now, the long hill before her, the short hill behind her, straightened below into the business streets, were pricked out in yellow and white sparks of light. The great electric tower had a white blaze with radiating bristles, like a weird porcupine. The snow was crisp under her tread. Just as she came opposite the church, the chimes broke forth.

Sweet and keen the notes pealed through the air:

"God bless you merry gentlemen  
Let nothing you dismay,  
For Jesus Christ our Saviour  
Was born on Christmas day."

Years and years ago, when the sister whom she had taught herself to hate, was a little innocent baby no bigger than her own little girl, Celia had sung that carol to her and told her about Santa Claus. Yes, she had taken her into a shop, once, to see a great figure. Likely enough it was to that story the child alluded.

"To think of her coming here to live just when I was getting settled and comfortable," thought Celia bitterly, and making no account of Mr. Brace's business.

She recalled with a sick heart all the miserable times under her father's roof; a thousand petty squabbles, the venomous fashion in which her stepmother poisoned the child's heart against her, the neglect of the house and her own pitiful efforts to keep the surface smooth, so that her father might not be worried; her father's ghastly face, the agony of the end: the dragging, degrading torment of it all.

"She is her mother's own daughter and I never will forgive her!" she vowed. She vowed it all the more earnestly that she felt herself shaken by the sight of the little face, so like the little face that she once had loved.

It was relief to reach her own gate, her own door. She went in. The fire was blazing in the open fireplace; the old fashioned red plush and damask of the chairs; the pretty furnishings, the etchings on the walls and the detail that poor Eliza left her, how friendly and bright they looked coming out of the dark chill!

Reggy and Maddox, his nurse, had their heads close together over a table and a sheet of paper. Maddox folded the paper just as Miss Wilder entered.

"And it must be put up the chimney, Maddox," says Master Reggy very earnestly, "you might address it to Santa Claus, care of the chimney you know."

Maddox, in the most matter of fact way would have thrown the note in the fire, but Celia arrested her.

"I'll put it up the chimney for you, dear," said she.

She was glad to get off her street dress. She always dressed for her late dinner. Like the dinner, the soft black silks that she wore were a relic of the old Washington state.

When she came down, she sat in the great carved armchair and let Reggy crumple her pretty dark hair and pull her little ears (a funny caress of his) at his lordship's pleasure. Half dreamily she enjoyed his affection and the music of his small, rippling voice.

Suddenly, without any warning: "Auntie, Maddox says I can't never have a little sister," says Reggy, "can't I?"

"Why, no, Reggy,"—rather startled—"I suppose not." Then she sighed and stroked his brown curls. "You know you have two little sisters in Heaven."

Master Reggy squirmed and kicked the chair, as he exploded: "I don't care for them! they ain't no company for me! I want a little sister that can play ball and 'lectric chairs with me, like Gracie Brace!"

"Gracie Brace!" cried his aunt almost pushing him from her, "when did you ever see Gracie Brace?"

"Why, I've seen her lots and lots of times—anyway four times; and I've played in her yard."

Miss Celia gasped. She did not answer Rex; she could not. This must be stopped; but over the best way to stop it she must need meditate; so, silent, and knitting her long slim fingers, Celia frowned at the fire.

Rex went on with his thoughts: "Auntie, can't Santa Claus give me a sister for Christmas. I'd rather have a sister than a donkey."

"No, Rex dear, neither Santa Claus nor anyone can give you a sister."

Rex looked at her. He had never known his aunt to despise him. His little lip twitched, the tears gathered in his wide brown eyes. In a childish gust of passion, like a flash he tore the crumpled little note that he had given his aunt and that she was still holding, out of her fingers and aimed it at the fire; crying: "Then I don't care anything about Santa, nor Christmas, neither, and I won't give him his note!"

Celia captured the note—it had only reached the tiles of the hearth—and slid it into her pocket. Then she clasped the little quivering, angry boy creature and whispered: "Hush desire, it isn't Santa Claus' fault. Nobody can give you a little sister."

"Can't nobody?" said Rex solemnly.

"Nobody, dear."

"But God can, can't He?"

It was one of those logical avalanches that children are always pulling down on our heads. Miss Celia crawled out, with the usual craven evasion. "Reggy, it would be a miracle, and there are no miracles nowadays."

"What's a miracle?"—busy with his aunt's ear and twisting it so that he hurt her—"and why can't they have 'em nowadays?"

More craven evasion from Miss Celia, "Reggy, dear, you are too little to understand, when you get older I will tell you."

"Tell it to me so I can understand, like you did about the 'lectric cars!"

"I can't," said Miss Celia truthfully. But he was so woful in his disappointment and perplexity that she did not abandon the subject, like a wise woman, but parleyed with him, and tangled herself up in explanations and futile consolations, to the effect that little sisters did not come grown up and able to play; but, at first, were unpleasant red babies who could do nothing but cry.

Rex brought the consolation up with a round turn, exclaiming: "No, Auntie, that isn't always so! Willy Durham has got a little new sister, he has only had her a month, his mamma got her in Chicago, at Field's I guess, 'cause I heard her tell you yesterday: 'You can get everything at Field's now; and she's four years old; and rides on a tricycle!'"

"But my dear, she is little adopted sister."

"Oh!" Reggy had a way of letting out a single, abrupt, bitten off "Oh!" when his mind was working; it was like a puff of steam from an engine, sure to have results, soon. Presently he spoke again, very slowly. "Auntie, I spose 'dopted sisters are the big ones. I'd rather have a 'dopted sister, I think. Do you have to buy 'dopted sisters at Field's?"

Rashly Miss Celia answered that you could take any little girl that you liked whose parents or guardians would let you have her.

Reggy said "Oh!" and said not another word on the subject. But when he came to his prayers at night (such a quiet, good little boy as he was all through dinner and the evening) he added an original postscript: "Please God give Reggy a little 'dopted sister, that can ride on a donkey."

Miss Celia made no comment; it was one of the times when she felt how hard it was to decide on the right course for a boy.

Down stairs, she took out Reggy's note to Santa Claus. On a very smudgy and crumpled sheet of paper was written:

"Dear Santa Claus:—I want a little sister and a donkey and a little cart and a typewriter like Maddox's niece plays on at the office. My aunt wants a good little boy, maybe I will do. Henry Feretzel wants a fur cap to keep him warm when he drives aunty. Teena wants an easier place where they have dinner in the middle of the day, but I guess she was mad when she said that so you don't need to mind, but she truly wants a photograph album. Mrs. Feretzel wants a tea kettle, the cover has come off of hers and she doesn't know any English so she can't buy one down town, but you can talk Swedish can't you? And I want a little sister most of all. Maddox wants a good little boy, too, like aunty. Lizzie our second girl that never saw Santa Claus wants a new cap and an umbrella, and please don't forget I want a little sister. Maddox writes this but I write my name myself." Below in Reggy's cramped little hand was: "I love you Santa Clos. Reggy."

"Poor little pet lamb!" said Miss Wilder tenderly. "I hope he will forget about the sister and be content with his donkey and the typewriter his uncle has sent him. Now the other things—I believe I have everything except the teapot. How like Maddox to never say a word for herself. I hope she'll like her dress." Thus thinking, she called Maddox to consult with her about the tea kettle.

Generally, Maddox (from long and careful "knowing her place") looked no more expressive than the wooden woman who comes out to announce pleasant weather, in some toy barometers; but to-night, there was a dab of red on each cheek and a queer, flickering brightness in her pale eyes.

"Miss Celia, I was coming to tell you," she began in her ordinary voice, but her hands were plucking at her apron, "there is some—news!"

"News?" repeated Miss Celia, while her heart went seeking timorously for possible loss or sorrow; for this is the cruel ghost of affliction, that we shall ever afterward be afraid.

"I have been doing what 'tis like you won't approve, Miss Celia," Maddox continued stolidly, "I know Mrs. Brace's nurse girl, I knew her before she went to Mrs. Brace, she being Mrs. Feretzel's sister, and so she sometimes comes here at night. And she was here this evening. And I let her talk about her mistress."

"That was wrong, Maddox," said Celia with dry lips.

"Yes ma'am, but the subject came up unbeknownst to me. She says Mrs. Brace is a very kind lady—" Miss Celia only lifted her hand.

"That ain't it, Miss Celia. Mrs. Brace is in mourning now and—it's for her mother, Miss Celia."

Dead! A wicked woman, Celia believed her; but her sins were gone to that solemn audit where the cleanest of souls must need mercy.

"God forgive her!" said Celia.

"Yes ma'am," said Maddox in all sincerity. "She died very suddenly, in Paris, a month ago come tomorrow. You know she was married again, Miss Celia, to a French gentleman; so they buried her there; and sent all papers and things to Mrs. Brace; and Eliza says there is something in these papers about you, and she thinks Mrs. Brace wants to make friends."

The red crept into Celia's cheek; she drew up her slim figure haughtily. You see it is an easy thing to forgive the dead, the living are another matter.

"I wish Mrs. Brace no harm," said Celia in a clear tone. "our paths lie apart. She chose it when she would not come to our father on his death bed. But that is not why I sent for you, Maddox."

Maddox told Teena that she felt herself "fair snapped in two."

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 10.]

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Yours respectfully,

Mrs. A. J. THURBER

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## MY DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS:

Let me tell you how to have some good times with your presents this Christmas. We all enjoy the day, and the giving and receiving of gifts; and as it "comes but once a year," we might as well have just as jolly a time as we can.

One way of distributing the presents, is to have them all snugly wrapped in paper (and the more layers the better) and placed in a big basket the day before. Cover the basket with a shawl or blanket hung over two chairs. On Christmas morning, all gather around the basket, while one draws forth and distributes the parcels, which should of course be plainly marked with the name of the intended recipient. Scissors will be in loud demand for a while, and the floor will be apt to present a chaos of paper and twine; but that only makes more fun, you know.

A variation on this is to wrap all the small parcels in several papers, each wrapper bearing the name of some one of the family, while the inner layer has the name of the one for whom the gift is really intended.

As these are opened and passed around from one to another according to directions, the faces of the unlucky ones who find that a specially desirable parcel is not theirs after all, and the delight of others in an unexpected "run of luck," is very amusing.

Another very exciting plan is to hide the gifts, properly wrapped and labelled, in all parts of the house, from garret to cellar, and set the family to hunting. When one finds a parcel not intended for himself, he lets it alone and says nothing; this prolongs the hunt, and gives a chance for kindly hints. Sometimes strings are fastened to certain parcels, and then woven all over the house, into trunks and boxes, up and down stairs, etc. The end of this



THE START.

string is given to the destined owner of the gift, and he is told to wind it up until he finds the end. This makes fun if it is tried in the evening, when the house is only partially lighted.

Still another way is to arrange the parcels after the fashion of the "fish pond" at a fair, and let the family fish for them. Or the "grab-bag" idea is not a bad one. But I have told you enough for this time, so I will just wish you all the merriest kind of a Christmas, and let you do the rest of the talking this month yourselves.

Dear Aunt Minerva:—I live in a little town called Lakeville, it is situated in the western part of Plymouth Co., Mass. From the name of the town one couldn't help knowing there were lakes here, and there are several and one of them is Assawampsett, which is the largest lake in Massachusetts. I live four miles from it. Papa has a small boat on the lake, and summers we go there and have picnics. The population of Lakeville is about 1000. It contains one church and three chapels, two factories, one shop and the other a nail factory which my father owns and runs; it is about a stones throw from our house. We have no graded schools of any kind here, so for our high school education we have to go to the adjoining town (Middleboro) which is but three miles distant. I wonder how many of the cousins have been to old historic Plymouth where the Pilgrims landed in 1620? The sights are really worth going to see. I live within 30 miles of there. I have no pets only a bird dog of papa's, and he likes to be petted all of the time. I am an only child and there are very few girls near me of my age (15) so sometimes I get lonely. Last March I saw an advertisement in a paper saying that if any one would send 10c they could have 3 packages of flower seeds and COMFORT for three months. I sent and got them, and I like COMFORT so well that I shall subscribe for it when I can. I would like to correspond with some of the girl cousins. Your new niece,

MABEL OSBORNE, Lakeville, Mass.

You must have some fine times boating, Mabel. I wish I would be there to go with you, and especially when you are having a picnic on some specially fine day.

"I live in the garden spot of the world, where the flowers never cease to bloom; even at Christmas we can go into the woods and gather wild flowers to decorate and make home cheerful. How many of you Maine cousins would like to see wild flowers Christmas? I think flowers are the most beautiful things on earth. I have a great many, our yard is crowded. I think COMFORT is the nicest little paper imaginable. I enjoy reading it ever so much. Will some of the cousins please send me all of the story, 'The Mysterious Twins,' up to the July number? I would be ever so much obliged, and return the papers if they don't want to give them away. Would like a girl correspondent about my age, which is 14, from Maine. Your loving niece,

FLOSSIE RANDALL, Faceville, Ga."



THE JOURNEY.

Flowers at Christmas, just think of it! Here we have only ice and snow out-of-doors, not even a green leaf except a few belated ones on the apple trees. To be sure, we have some flowers in the house, but even those look as if they knew it was winter outside.

"I live in the picturesque village of Ellenville, about 100 miles from N. Y. I study arithmetic, grammar, history and geography. We have speaking every two weeks here. We choose sides and then each side elects its president, vice-president, secretary and committee, and each party speaks every four weeks—don't you think that is a nice plan? We have three rooms in our school and two class-rooms. I would like to correspond with some of the cousins of my own age (18).

Your affectionate niece, PEARL ARNOYS,  
Box 77, Ellenville, Ulster Co., N. Y."

Kind Aunt Minerva:—My auntie is a subscriber to COMFORT and I see so many nice letters written by small cousins that I would like to join them. I reside in New Orleans or Crescent City, and it is a beautiful place. I attend the Pinac Institute and was given a silver medal for lessons and a premium for arithmetic at our commencement in June. I am in the country at present visiting my grandparents and have glorious times; we have such grand rides.

BERTHA BLOCH, 9 years old, Napoleonville, La.

Dear Auntie:—I have been reading the COMFORT for about 2 years, and am a dear lover of the paper. I think the children's column is just grand. I am a girl of 11 years. My father is a farmer, and we are very poor at present, and so much affliction in our family. I have a brother and sister. Sister is 28 years old and is totally blind, and brother is 16 and is very badly afflicted with his eyes and rheumatism in his limbs. He is not able to do very much work; he plays the accordion and mouth organ, and wants a fiddle very bad but we are not able to afford it. He has been so since 8 years of age. We live in the country and get very lonesome. Our nearest neighbor is 5 miles; our post-office is 5 miles. The railroad goes 100 rods from our house. It is very lonesome here, no one to see only as the train comes, and it only comes once a day. My brother would like some of the cousins to write to him and send him any little thing to pass away the time. ELLA KENDALL, Rockham, Faulk Co., Dak.

You must indeed be very lonely, Ella. It seems terrible to us, who live within a stone's throw of neighbors, to think of having none within five miles. I hope some of the young folks will write to Ella and her brother, and send them some good reading.

Dear Auntie and Cousins:—I live way down here in the Sunny South among the sweet-scented flowers and lofty pines. I do not live near any mountains, but I enjoy our sunny Southern home. I am corresponding with an Indian girl; she is 16 and I certainly enjoy reading her letters. I cannot praise COMFORT too highly. When I get a copy I do not stop till it gives me comfort by reading the newsy letters from the distant cousins. It is a nice little paper and well deserves the name of COMFORT. I have 2 little sisters. Two of us go to school at the institute in sight of our home. I am a farmer's daughter. My papa is P. M. here and I write as many letters as I wish. I am a little bird, but don't let the owls know I can fly; I am afraid they might come after me. Papa plants cotton and any of the girl cousins (who have never seen any) who will correspond with me, I will send them enough to see what it is.

FLOSSIE BYRD, age 12, Poe's, Harnett Co., N. C.

My dear Aunt Minerva:—Will you please admit a 16 year old niece into your cozy corner? Dear Auntie, I want you to pay a kind word to the nice Editor of COMFORT for us children. Ask him if he won't please relinquish a whole page to us, young folks, to write upon; for I know we all love you as much as the big folks do, and expect more. We need attention, too. You needn't be afraid we will get cross at you for being garrulous. Because we like these loquacious, old aunts. Now, Auntie, I didn't mean to say you are old, for you look "awfully nice and good" with your two solemn-looking owls sitting beside you in your picture. I don't like owls, for they make such ugly noise and scare me. I expect that's the reason Auntie keeps hers, to scare us children away, but we won't heed. I must tell you of my home. I live in the beautiful country, about 8 miles from the city of Martinsburg. My teacher is from there, too. We all love her so much. It is the beautiful Shenandoah Valley in which I live, hemmed in by the Blue Ridge Mts. on the east and the Alleghenies on the west. The peaceful and pacific Potomac river is near here, also. I agree with you, dear little Zelma, about loving God's sweet little birds and His dear flowers. I have them around me all the time. I feel sorry for your poor mama in her affliction. But He doeth all things well, and He watcheth kindly over her with His dear and loving eye. I have dear parents, one brother and two sis-

ters younger than I. I want to teach school next year. I wish all of the cousins were with me now while I am writing this. For it is too lovely in the country to-day. The sun is shining in all his glory upon me; and I am writing this out in the yard. Your affectionate niece, VERNIE K. LEDANE, Bedington, Berkeley Co., W. Va.

I think the Editor will have to enlarge COMFORT. Vernie, if he makes room for all the cousins who want to write. The older ones are constantly begging for more room. Some time we will ask him to issue a supplement, with nothing in it but letters; how would you like that?

Dear Auntie:—I will write about this beautiful "Prairie State," Illinois. It derived its name from "Illini," an Indian word signifying "superior men." Its inhabitants are called "Suckers." The first white man who ever set foot within the present boundary of the State was Nicholas Perrot, at Chicago, in 1671. I live 3 miles from the Illinois river, and 4 miles from Peoria. The country hereabout was formerly inhabited by several tribes of the Illinois Indians. We find many Indian relics, such as arrow-heads, axes, drills, etc. I have about 500 arrow-heads, of which I have sent you one, which I hope you will accept. I want all the cousins to write to me about their State, etc. I am your humble nephew, age 15.

FRED LUX, East Peoria, Ill.

Thank you very much for the arrow-head, Fred; it was an unusually fine specimen. I omitted your offer, in printing your letter, as I knew you would be deluged with requests, and would rue the day you made it.

"Auntie, will you admit a farmer's daughter among your band? I am 16 years of age. I love to read the cousins' letters. My brother has 2 squirrels; he is going to tame them; they will sit on his lap and eat apples, hickory nuts, peas and other things. We keep them in a large box so that they cannot get away. I do not spend much time with pets; for I can plow, drag, bind grain, pitch hay and do many other things, so you see I am quite busy. I do housework when I have the time. Your niece,

MARY STOHR, Seneca, Wis."

No more room for us this time. I shall hope to hear from ever so many, about the way you spent Christmas.

Your, AUNT MINERVA.

## CONSUMPTION CURED.

An old physician, retired from practice, had placed in his hands by an East Indian missionary the formula of a simple vegetable remedy for the speedy and permanent cure of Consumption, Bronchitis, Catarrh, Asthma and all Throat and Lung Affections, also a positive and radical cure for Nervous Debility and all Nervous Complaints. Having tested its wonderful curative powers in thousands of cases, and desiring to relieve human suffering, I will send free of charge to all who wish it, this recipe in German, French or English, with full directions for preparing and using. Sent by mail, by addressing, with stamp, naming this paper, W. A. NOYES, 820 Powers' Block, Rochester, N. Y.

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RICHER THAN THE CALIFORNIA GOLD FIELDS. ONE NUGGET of Pure Gold weighing Eleven (11) Pounds, value \$3,520, recently picked up in this region (See N. Y. Financial and Mining Record.) A DIAMOND from this section now owned by Col. HENRY DEMING, of Harrisburg, worth \$2,500. Rubies and Garnets also.

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## \$250.00 GIVEN AWAY IN GOLD

Under the conditions given as follows. In the words of BLAND & CLEVER, known ex-Presidents of the U. S., the same also being the name of one of the best known cities in the world.

To the first person sending in the correct name on or before January 30th, 1892, we will give \$25.00 cash, to the second sending the correct name \$20.00, to the third \$15.00, to the fourth \$10.00, to the next to the last \$20.00, to the second from the last \$15.00, to the third from the last \$10.00, and to the next \$5.00, and to the next fifty persons (if there are so many) \$1.00 to each.

With your answer send 25 cents in silver or stamps for a bottle of "STAR PILLS" the best Liver, Stomach, Bowel and Kidney Regulator ever used. They are made from bark, roots and herbs, very small, sugar coated, and gently yet promptly, no griping, 50 doses in each bottle. No answer will be recorded unless pills are ordered as these cash premiums are given simply to help introduce our wonderful medicine. Immediately after Jan. 31st, list all the names and addresses of the successful persons will be mailed to each person answering this ad. Satisfaction guaranteed or money will be refunded. As to our responsibility we refer to any bank or business firm in Chicago. This is the first time this ad. has appeared. Cut it out and write at once. Address,

INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL ASSO., 269 Dearborn St., Chicago, Ill.

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Offices in New York World and Philadelphia Press, May 18 and 19, 1890. The Christian Evangelist, May 30, 1890, says editorially: "The Kola Plant is a gift direct of God, to sufferers from Asthma, and His blessing will rest upon Stanley and associates, explorers of the Dark Continent. It is an unfailing cure for Asthma."

Remember, No Pay Until Cured.





## on COMFORT.

DECEMBER is again with us, the merriest month of the whole year. Thanksgiving has gone and left many with a bad case of dyspepsia from overeating, but they will recover in time for Christmas dinner, and New Year's calls. In another department for November was taken up the theme of Thanksgiving, and it was well treated. We surely can all of us take a lesson from the good words there said. Christmas is always a new theme for writers and will never grow threadbare as long as there are any children in this good world of ours. And how happy we can all make our homes with remembrances to our friends at this season, be they never so small. Do not allow yourselves to think a small gift will not be appreciated. As it is not the value which is cherished by most people, it is the pleasure of having been remembered.

Do not allow Grandpa and Grandma to sit in the corner and see all enjoying the gifts from friends and they have nothing at all, scrimp the young people, for they have many years in prospect to enjoy life. Whereas the dear old grandparents may be with you for the last time on this merry Christmas day.

And in playing your pleasant games in the evening, invite them to join you and also ask them to suggest some of the old games played when they were children and see with what joy they will join in the sport, and in many instances the pleasure afforded by them will be far in excess of anything you could have imagined.

If not too old they can most always dance and sing and will enjoy giving the children a few selections from the "old time melodies," such as were popular when they had singing school at the corner, and all the musical instrument was a tuning fork in the hand of the leader. And now that I am on the subject of songs what can be more uncertain and inexplicable than the popularity of a song just out. Bill Nye can write a popular article for a newspaper, but no writer can sit down and write a popular song. As an instance of this, the now popular song "Marguerite" lay around in the music stores for many months, and nobody bought it. One morning, however, the young man who wrote and composed it found himself famous. So it has been with less deserving songs, such as "McGinty" and "Annie Rooney." There is nothing in either of them to give them unearned popularity, yet they became very popular. But the One song of to-day—"Comrades"—is deservedly so. The music is good, and the chorus is fine, and the run of the whole has the merit of good sense. It is not only the music or words of the song which give it worth, the beautiful mingling of two natures in the sentiment of the song arouses us to think and feel that whatever our situation, there remains that love of companionship which is so strong in every human heart. It is a simple story simply told of the companionship from boyhood of two friends, how they became necessary to each other's existence all through life. When one joined the army the other followed. They are ordered far away to distant lands, no difference, they are together. In a fierce battle a savage aims a poisoned spear at the breast of one, the other steps in and receives the death blow in his own heart. That covers the whole story, and tells the tale of many of our brave boys in blue and gray in the late war. I will only make room for the chorus this time, as I think it fully expresses that spirit of comradeship which should exist in us all. It is as follows:

Comrades, comrades, ever since we were boys, sharing each other's sorrows, sharing each other's joys; Comrades when manhood was dawning, faithful whate'er might betide. When danger threatened my darling old comrade was there by my side.

The song was introduced to America by Besie Bonehill a year ago. It instantly became popular, and has since been sung by every one, to the exclusion of nearly every other song.

The publishers of COMFORT wishing to have every one of their five million readers learn this popular song, have secured it and are sending it out with about twelve dozen other songs absolutely free as a Christmas and New Year's present to all subscribers for renewing or extending their subscription for another year, which calls for only 25c. you know and gives you twelve more happy months of COMFORT. What a fine Christmas present, indeed! Send them the 25c. and secure this beautiful collection and COMFORT for a whole year. If you are a subscriber for a year, send it to some friend as a present. And you surely will afford that friend untold pleasure for the next twelve months.

Do not let the good times stop with Christmas but go on with the merry-makings until Dame Nature shall again come forth in her gorgeous robes of emerald to call us out to duties which we must perform in the long summer days.

The prize album has been awarded to Miss Josephine Puenten, Ventura, California, and I do wish you could see the letter of this little Swiss girl who has only been in America a few years, and does not have the privilege of attending school, but must help herself to learn our language as best she may. I cannot speak in too great praise of the beautiful letters I am receiving daily, they are some of them equal to the best I have ever seen, but little Josephine's letter is almost perfect, and I sincerely trust she will enjoy the album, and go on improving in our ways and language, and she is sure to be a noble woman.

I have so many questions on hand this month I am hardly able to decide on the ones which should have the space, and in making my decision I have selected those which I think will be of the most general use to my many young friends, and first on the list comes Irwin C., Lake Fork, Ills., with "What are the qualifications necessary to become a successful shorthand writer, time required to learn, wages usually paid, and what are the chances of obtaining employment after one has become com-

petent?" In reply, the first requisite is a moderately good education, and a general knowledge of the usual forms of speech used by men in business correspondence, a quick ear and an amiable disposition. The time required to learn depends on the close attention to the work. I should think with your command of language and good penmanship you could learn much and gain great headway in six months. The pay is generally very good and the positions and surroundings almost invariably pleasant. In a city there is a good prospect at almost all seasons of the year, and a competent stenographer or typewriter need not be idle if he or she can fill the bill as above. Of course there are many incompetent ones in the field but they soon go the rounds and the faithful and painstaking win the lucrative positions, and this profession is like all others, "What is worth doing, is worth doing well." The only way to improve one's handwriting is to practice. Never allow an opportunity to practice slip by you, and learn the muscular movement described in all compendiums.

JOHN D. G., Navarro, Texas.

My information regarding the convict miners of Tennessee is very meagre, and I can only answer your very interesting letter in a general way. I regret that I have not space for the letter here. I can only say, there can be little doubt that the arrangement which places one man or any number of men at the entire disposal and control of another, subject to his absolute and irresponsible will and power, is a system of things not the most favorable to moral excellence, whether of the master or the convict. The exercise of such authority must, in the nature of the case, tend to foster a spirit of brutality and force. There is in all cases of this nature a strong tendency to abuse the power we have over those who dare not resist. We certainly expect to find in connection with such a civil polity, a state of morals somewhat peculiar, acts of violence not infrequent, the animal appetites unrestrained, and I fear the system is a pernicious one, where the criminals are used as slaves were in former days. May we soon see a radical change in the state of affairs now existing.

One of the Southern born boys asks about our Northern cranberries, and if they would flourish in a Southern climate. I do not see why they should not, the most favorable location for their cultivation being where the soil is wet and swampy for several feet in depth, and where the water stands 4 to 6 inches over the ground a large portion of the time, and can be easily drained off the land to the depth of at least one foot, select thrifty plants from a good nursery and when the worms attack them, flow the land with water which will at once destroy them. Send me a few quarts from your bog next fall and I can then tell you if you were successful.

Ethel D. W., Whatcom, Wash., asks what constitutes or makes a place of worship. The worship of the Supreme Being seems to be an instinctive principle, an impulse of our nature, a law of the soul. Whoever builds an altar, or in the silent recesses of his heart breathes a prayer; whoever bows himself toward the rising sun, or stretches forth his hand in supplication toward the moon walking in her brightness, or the stars that gem the brow of night; whoever calls upon an unknown God, or worships the invisible spirit that filleth immensity with his presence, and is not far from every one of us, is but acting in accordance to the impulse and instinct of his nature, and needs no place of worship built with hands, in order to fitly offer up his thanks and praises.

EDDIE J. L., Culbertson, Ga.

Yes, there is a process by which you can make pencil writing almost as indelible as ink, it is to press on the pencil rather hard in writing and then either pass the tongue over the same, or breathe slowly on the paper after writing. This has been tried many times by persons using a book a long time and in which the leaves are liable to be rubbed together, causing the writing to become defaced by the diffusion of the lead over the paper. A trial of this simple experiment will readily convince you of its utility.

I have a large number of letters this month again asking how to write a *business letter*, and as we are giving a good amount of space each month to this subject a few words here will not be amiss and will serve to answer many letters.

1st. Use the fewest words which will clearly convey your meaning.

2d. Write plainly. Fancy penmanship is often unreadable, and it is better to write legibly, even if you think plain letters not so handsome.

3d. When ordering goods state carefully what articles you want and how much is enclosed.

4th. In replying to a letter always mention at the beginning that it is in reply to such a letter and here mention particulars.

5th. Always read your letter before enclosing it to be sure you have said all you wanted to say.

6. If money is to be enclosed, be sure it is, seal securely and direct plainly. If the firm to whom you have written does not in due time respond, in justice to yourself and him you should write for an explanation. State when you wrote, what you wrote for, the amount if any enclosed, how you directed the goods to be sent, and any other information you may be able to impart. If you merely write, "I sent you an order some time ago, and you have not filled it," it is impossible to investigate the matter in an establishment of any size. Do not call a merchant a swindler even if you think so, but give him a chance to make an explanation, and in many cases you will save yourself the necessity of an apology.

MOLLIE E. B., Calooga, Miss.

It is certainly in order for you to ask any questions you desire, and I promise you I will give you the answers to the best of my ability. Dixie is an imaginary place somewhere in the Southern States of America, celebrated in a popular Negro melody as a perfect paradise of luxurious ease and enjoyment. The term is often used as a collective designation of all the Southern States. It originated many years ago when slaves were owned in New York. A certain man named "Dixy" owned large tracts of land and many slaves, and when abolition grew stronger they emigrated South and the Negroes always looked upon him and his possessions as a sort of paradise, and in their natural songs they have immortalized his name.

EMMA DE V., Clinton, Ind.

"The weeping philosopher" is an epithet applied to Heracletus, a native of Ephesus, who flourished about 500 years B. C. He was of a gloomy and melancholy disposition, and is said to have been perpetually shedding tears on account of the vices of mankind.

Now before I see your happy faces again we will have had Christmas and all its joys and pleasures. New Years with its good resolves, so many only made to be broken. And in all these good times won't you all remember and try to increase your own happiness by doing something to make someone else happier, if only by a few kind words and a share of the good things given you by indulgent parents and friends, and let each day's descending sun be the witness of some kind action done. Keep up your interest in our meetings and address all your letters to Your loving,

UNCLE JOSEPHUS, (Care of COMFORT.)

## COMFORT.



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If so we can cure them quickly and permanently without pain, with **KING CORN SALVE**. It never fails, and you don't feel it. It is the most wonderful preparation for removing corns ever known, and once tried will take the place of all others. Try it, take an agency and make money. Any one can use it. Working day and night to fill orders. A little girl sold \$9 boxes in TWO days. Large profit. Quick sales. Ladies, this is your chance, and men and boys are making fortunes with it. Every box warranted to cure. PRESENTS for EVERYBODY. A trial package, and all particulars, **free** for only 15 cents. Come now, and get your share of the money. You can make money faster with KING CORN SALVE than with any other article on the market to-day. And the PRESENTS—they just captivate all who see them. **Remember**, all is fully explained with each sample package, and you will then be all ready for BUSINESS. Write to-day for KING CORN SALVE. **Capital Drug Co., Augusta, Maine.**



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## COMFORT.



DEAR COUSINS:  
I shall take it for granted that all of you know just how to cook the Christmas roast beef, or to stuff that fat turkey or goose which will grace your table. So I will not give you any instructions in that line at all. But on Christmas eve, when all the children are at home, you will want to have a "candy dab;" and so this is just the time to give some nice receipts which one of the cousins sent long ago.

## PEANUT CANDY.

Prepare the meats by removing the reddish skin, and fill a tin to the depth of about one inch. Boil 2 pounds of brown sugar, 1-2 pint of water and 1 gill of good molasses until it hardens. Pour the hot candy on the meats. When nearly cold divide into squares.

## MARSH MALLOWES.

Dissolve 1 pound of clean gum arabic in 1 quart of water, strain; add 1 pound of refined sugar and place over a fire, stirring continually until the sugar is dissolved and the mixture has become of the consistency of honey; next add gradually the whites of 8 eggs, well beaten, stirring the mixture all time until it loses its stickiness and does not adhere to the fingers when touched. Pour into a pan dusted with flour or starch, when cool divide into small squares. Before turning out the paste it should be flavored, rose is usually employed.

## JUJUBE PASTE.

Take of gum arabic 1 pound, dissolve in a pint and a half of water and add 1 pound of sugar. Cook to a thick consistency, and when cooled a little flavor, and then turn into shallow tin pans that have been buttered.

## CHOCOLATE CREAM DROPS.

Prepare a cream as follows: Take the white of 1 egg, beat to a froth, adding an equal bulk of water at the last. Into this stir enough sugar to make a doughy mass sufficiently firm to be handled. Powdered sugar should be used. Place on a buttered tin and allow to harden a little after making into the desired shapes. Now place a cake of the best plain chocolate in a saucepan—a double boiler is the best. No water is needed, as the chocolate will slowly melt and become a thick fluid. Now introduce the balls of cream, one or two at a time, and roll in the chocolate for a moment until entirely covered.

Egg stains on silver can be taken off with table salt and a wet rag. Salt sprinkled over anything that is burning on the stove will prevent any disagreeable odor.

Grease may be removed from silk by applying magnesia to the wrong side. BLOSSOM.

I will add to these a few of my own favorite receipts.

## TAFFY.

One cup sugar, 1 cup molasses, 1-2 cup vinegar, 1-2 cup butter. Boil till brittle when dropped in water, cool in a buttered tin and break into pieces.

## SUGAR CANDY.

Two cups sugar, 1-3 cup water, 2 tablespoons vinegar, butter size of small egg, 1 tablespoon glycerine. Boil without stirring over a slow fire, until it will crack when cooled in water. Pull without buttering the hands, adding any flavor preferred. It may be divided into several parts, and different flavors pulled in. Open the lump of candy and drop in the flavoring, then double together and pull.

## CHOCOLATE CARAMELS.

One and one-half cups sugar, 1-1-2 cups molasses, 1 cup sweet milk, 2 squares chocolate, 1-2 cup butter, 2 tablespoons corn starch. Stir occasionally to prevent burning.

## SHERBET.

Two cups sugar, 2-3 cup molasses, 1-2 cup milk, 2 squares chocolate. Boil until it is hard in water, not brittle. Add a large piece of butter, and a pinch of salt when almost done. Flavor with vanilla. Remove from fire, beat until it shows signs of sugaring, then pour out quickly.

Perhaps some of you are tired of your way of making plum pudding, and would like to try a new receipt. I find one among some which have been sent by an old contributor.

## PLUM PUDDING.

Cream together 1-2 cup each of butter and sugar, add 2 eggs well beaten, 1-2 cup each of sour milk and molasses. Add one large cup of fruit, currants or raisins; for spices, 1-2 teaspoonful each of cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg and pimento; dissolve a teaspoonful of soda in a very little water and add with flour to make a rather stiff batter, not quite as thick as cake. Steam about 4 hours, a pinch of salt will add to the flavor. These puddings will keep a week and are nearly as good cold, or warmed over as when new. To be eaten with sauce or not, as liked.

## CREAM PUDDING SAUCE.

Beat 1-1-2 cups of sugar with 1-2 cup nice fresh butter to a foamy cream, which will require about 20 minutes, add a well beaten egg and flavoring to taste just before it is wanted, beat into the sauce 3 tablespoonsfuls of boiling water, stir rapidly to prevent curdling.

## MOLASSES OR VINEGAR SAUCE.

Take 1-2 cup molasses, stir in a rounding tablespoonful of flour, and about 1-2 cup of hot water, or enough to thin it. Set on stove, add a piece of butter as large as half an egg. Let it simmer slowly until it thickens a little, perhaps about 15 minutes, remove from the stove and add 2 tablespoonsfuls of vinegar and a little nutmeg.

## VARIETY PUDDING.

One cup bread crumbs, 1 large cup thick tart apple sauce, 1 egg, 1-2 cup sugar, a small piece of butter, 1-1-2 cups sweet milk, bake and serve with cream sauce.

## CUSTARD PUDDING.

Two eggs, 1-1-2 pints sweet milk, 1 teaspoon butter, a pinch of soda, 1 large cup of cake crumbs, and 1 tablespoonful of sugar, flavor to taste, beat the eggs with the sugar, then add the other ingredients and bake rather slowly for about 3-4 of an hour. Reserve the white of one egg, beat to a stiff froth, add 2 teaspoons sugar and 1-2 teaspoon lemon. Let the pudding cool, and spread, return to the oven, brown slightly, and cool again before serving.

I think the receipt for Wedding Cake in the April number an excellent one, and a good cake for young and old, married persons to have.

Mrs. LINNIE WEBBER,  
East Sullivan, Maine.

Do you have soup with your Christmas dinner? Here are some ways of making it.

## SAGO SOUP.

Wash 3 ounces of sago in boiling water and add gradually to 2 quarts of nearly boiling stock with seasoning to taste. Simmer for half an hour, when it should be well dissolved; beat up the yolks of 3 eggs, add them to half a pint of milk or cream, stir quickly into the soup and serve immediately. Do not let the soup boil after the eggs are put in, or it will curdle.

## PEA SOUP.

Use 1 pint of dried peas for every 4 quarts of soup, wash the peas well, then put them in 6 quarts of cold water, let them come slowly to a boil, add meat with a carrot and an onion, simmer for 3 hours, strain the soup through a sieve, place on the fire again, and put in 1 tablespoonful of flour, and the same of butter mixed together. Brown some bread crumbs in the oven, put them in a tureen and pour the soup over them.

## HICKORY NUT CAKE.

Half a cup of butter, same of milk, 1 cup sugar, 2 of flour, 2 teaspoonfuls of baking powder, 1 heaping cup of raisins, 2 eggs, and 1 large cupful of hickory nut meat chopped very fine.

## QUICK LOAF CAKE.

One cup sugar, 1 cup shortening half hard butter, 1 cup milk, 1 teaspoonful soda, 2 teaspoonfuls cream of tartar, half a teaspoonful each of nutmeg and cinnamon, 1 cup each of raisins and flour.

Mrs. A. S. MOREY.

For a side dish you will want some

## SCOLLOPED OYSTERS.

Cover the bottom of the pan or dish that you wish to cook them in (have it well buttered) with fine bread crumbs, and sprinkle over them many bits of butter, some salt and pepper. Lay on this a layer of oysters and so on until the pan is full as you like. Pour in a teacupful of oyster liquor. Sprinkle over the last layer of oysters, bread crumbs, butter, pepper and salt, and pour over that a teacupful of rich sweet cream. Wherever the bits of butter occur, let them be large bits, for oysters need nothing so liberally as butter; it seems to develop their flavor perfectly. Bake the top brown. Send to table immediately, do not let them stay in oven too long; overcooking is as bad as too little butter, either ruins them.

M. L. AMASON.

Then for tea make an

## ALMOND CAKE.

One cup white sugar, 1-1-2 cups sweet cream, 1 tablespoon butter, 1-1-2 cups flour, 1-1-2 cups blanched almonds, 2 teaspoonfuls baking powder, whites of 4 eggs beaten stiff. Bake in one loaf.

ETHEL.

Or try some of the following good receipts:

## DRIED APPLE FRUIT CAKE.

Soak 3 cupfuls of dried apples over night in cold water enough to swell them, chop them in the morning, and put them on the fire with 3 cups of molasses; stew until almost soft, add a cupful of nice raisins (seedless if possible) and stew a few moments, when cold add 3 cupfuls of flour, 1 cupful of butter, 3 eggs and 1 teaspoonful of soda; bake in a steady oven. This will make 2 good sized panfuls of splendid cake. The apples will cook like citron and taste deliciously. Raisins may be omitted also spices to taste may be added. This is not a dear but delicious cake.

One of the cousins asked for the receipt for ginger snaps; here is mine, for

## BAKER'S GINGER SNAPS.

Boil all together the following ingredients: 2 cups of brown sugar, 2 cups of cooking molasses, 1 cup of shortening, (which should be part butter) 1 large tablespoonful of ginger, 1 tablespoonful of ground cinnamon, 1 teaspoonful of cloves, remove from the fire and let it cool. In the meantime sift 4 cups of flour and stir part of it into the above mixture. Now dissolve a teaspoonful of soda in a tablespoonful of warm water and beat into this mixture. Stir in the remainder of the flour and make stiff enough to roll into long rolls about 1 inch in diameter and cut off from the end into half inch pieces, place them on well buttered tins, giving plenty of room to spread in a moderate oven, let them cool before taking out of the tins.

## DOMINOES.

Have a plain cake baked in rather thin sheets, and cut into small oblong pieces the same shape as a domino, but a trifle larger. Frost the top and sides. When the top frosting is hard, draw the black lines and make the dots with a small brush dipped in melted chocolate. These are very nice for children's parties.

Mrs. P. W. QUICKEBNER,

Grantsdale, Mont.

The children will be pleased with little cakes ornamented with the fancy figures and candies which may be bought at the confectioners. Any plain cake receipt, the simpler the better, will answer for this purpose. Frost them with boiling water and powdered sugar, beaten together with a silver knife until it will drop readily from the knife (not run in a stream, but drop in detached pieces.) This is simple and easily made.

These receipts will do for this month, and sweeten you up thoroughly. A Merry Christmas to all from your

Cousin CERES.

## HOW I MADE \$100.

My cousin in Pa., wrote me of his success plating knives, forks and spoons. I bought a \$5 outfit from H. F. Delno & Co. of Columbus, Ohio. It plates with gold, silver or nickel. It plates watches and jewelry splendidly. I made \$100 in one month. I can sell a number of platters now and get all the plating I can do at home. This may not interest you Mr. Editor, but many readers may be glad to learn of a chance to make money.

Yours truly,

FRED. EARL.

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# THE TATTLEBACK TEA TABLE CLUB

BY JOHN S. GREY.

Christmas, which is supposed to bring to everybody everywhere the best of good cheer whether it is desired or not, found the quiet town of Tattleback fully prepared to enjoy the blessings of the season. Caleb's political club intended to celebrate the festival with spirit (of an alcoholic nature), but the ladies of the Tea Table club set to work with a will to ensure an extraordinary good time in a quiet sort of way, by enjoying themselves thoroughly while setting an example to the rest of the population.

Members were notified that the December, or Christmas gathering, would be celebrated in an unusual manner, and invitations were extended to all members to bring friends with them. Many of the ladies were busily employed for days previous in contriving and arranging all kinds of decorations for the club rooms, and, from the worthy Student down to Bridget, everyone seemed more than ordinarily interested. Miss Wing had written some violet tinted poetry of the "sawed off in the middle" order, and had interwoven the words with some wool in a variety of striking couplets for the walls. Here are a few of them:

"The club presents its compliments

To all the friends of temperance," in woolen letters faced the entrance to the reception room, and at once bespoke the principles of the club and the class of visitors that were welcome to its portals. Over the mantel-piece of the reception room was to be seen

"We'll guarantee you perfect cheer

Without ale, whisky, wine or beer." Miss Wing prided herself considerably upon some of these "laconics," as she called them, and drew especial attention to one of them, reading:

"Ladies! pause upon the brink—

Wed no man who's fond of drink!"

which was intended for the particular benefit of the maiden members of the club who might be, or were waiting to be, tempted into matrimony.

And, twisted over the chandelier in the centre of the reception room was a large bunch of holly and mistletoe, though, as Mrs. Traggle facetiously remarked, she could not see why the latter was there, inasmuch as the male sex being prohibited admission, it could not be put to its traditional use. In the meeting room the following couplets were to be found ornamenting the walls:

"This is the season for joyous greeting,

And thus we greet you who come to meeting," unjoining this was the euphonious card:

"Let us hope that each December

Brings good luck to every member," and this inscription gave universal satisfaction:

"We're Tattleback ladies, determined to win

Our battle 'gainst whisky, rum, brandy and gin!" Behind the President's chair was suspended a pretty conceit of Miss Wing's:

"Dorothy Cripps, our President

Unquestionably competent!

May the club which she will nourish

Be a striking one, and flourish!" It had been unanimously agreed by those in authority that the Christmas meeting should be of longer duration than usual, and that a slight repast should be served at the opening of the proceedings, while a more substantial meal should terminate the evening. Thus, when the members and friends were seated at the different tables Bridget was in her element. She was not only a good waitress, custom made, but



A READY MAID AND TO ORDER.

She was here, there and everywhere—the most ubiquitous individual in the club. It really seemed as if she had many pairs of hands, so nimble were they in pouring out tea and coffee, opening bottles of ginger ale, and passing cake, fruit, and sandwiches to the assembled guests. Bridget wore her best Christmas smile and an apron to match, while a general festive air pervaded her costume and manner. She laughed so frequently that it was with difficulty she could get her face straight between smiles, and the echoes of her laughter had not time to leave the building before she burst out afresh.

It was after the ladies had concluded their eating and drinking that the crowd adjourned to the meeting room for business, and Dorothy having rapped for silence began to speak. Her remarks in brief were as follows:

"My friends, at this glorious' holiday season, when man and womankind are privileged more than at any other time, to rejoice and give themselves up to pleasure, it is but proper that an institution like our own should observe the occasion fittingly, not simply by the outward display of decorations and emblems, but in the higher sense of feeling and doing good to our fellow creatures. There are fortunately in our town, few that are very poor, and none that are starving, but many to whom a little fruit or other luxury would be a great boon. We have glorious examples before us of what has been done from time immemorial in the way of giving to the poor at Christmas time, and I think I but foreshadow the sentiments of the club when I propose that, while we are transacting ordinary business, Bridget shall be instructed to gather up the fragments of our repast and take them down to the Widow Duckworth and her five little children." (Hear, hear.) "All in favor of this proposition say 'Aye!'" (A spontaneous aye from the assemblage.)

"All opposed to the proposition say 'No!'" The silence was more painfully quiet than Philadelphia—there was no "no" noticeable from Tattleback ladies on a question of that character, or possibly the dissentient would have been recommended for expulsion.

So Bridget's smile broadened out behind each ear as she loaded up a basket with all manner of good things, and started off down the village street in the direction of the widow's cottage. When she was gone Mrs. Rubenstein rose and said:

"Ladies, I hat mit me brought somedings vich I know efer yone of our sex cannot much do mitout alrely, I great pleasure hat in presenting dot morr in the corner in to de members."

And lo, when the ladies looked into the corner where Bridget had just left, they found she had uncovered a large swing mirror which had been concealed with a tablecloth. For Bridget had been in the secret with Mrs. Rubenstein, but was absent when the presentation was made.

There were many cries of approval of this latest gift to the club, and Miss Wing immediately proposed that a formal vote of thanks be tendered Mrs. Rubenstein, and that the facts be duly recorded in writing in the transactions of the society, which be-

ing done, the little schoolmistress took her position in front of the mirror and began to arrange her hair. "Ladies," she said presently, raising her voice loud enough to attract general attention, "though standing before the mirror you will allow that I am

the growth forever destroyed without the slightest

injury or discoloration of the most delicate skin."

Discovered by Accident.—In compounding, an incomplete mixture was accidentally

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At Christmas time a jingling rhyme  
'Tis wisely said is gladly read  
By men at all events.  
And women who have work to do  
In every State and clime,  
Will read the verse if bright and terse  
About this Christmas time.  
When Christmas chimes in olden times  
Fall on the listener's ear,  
He knew the ring would comfort bring  
With plenty of good cheer.  
And even so where'er we go  
To-day, the church-bells chime  
Gives joy I guess, and happiness  
To all this Christmas time.  
Of all the joys for girls and boys,  
For women and for men,  
That Santa Claus can ever cause  
To those within his ken,  
It is indeed, what takes the lead—  
The tales and stories prime,  
Which *COMFORT* gives to he who lives  
This jolly Christmas time.

J. S. G.

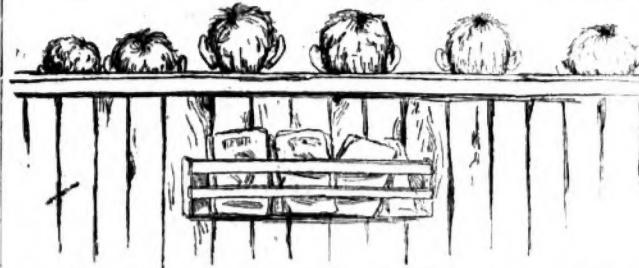
### THE WORLD'S FAIR.

With the January number we inaugurate our series of illustrated articles on the World's Fair and intend to make them especially entertaining and instructive, as the many hundreds of millions of dollars to be represented and expended by the people at this great exhibit calls for more than passing mention, and we feel that *COMFORT* needs to do its share toward acquainting its people with all the details of this vast undertaking. We have also arranged to have articles written by some of the most prominent persons in the country during the coming year. The millionaires of N. Y. and other places will be written up and articles from hosts of new writers from all over the world will appear during the year. *COMFORT* is destined to become the most popular monthly ever published, and we invite you all to help increase its circulation by getting new subscribers this month. Our premium offers are such that it will well repay you to work for *COMFORT*, and besides we are to give a large number of presents to club getters in addition to regular premiums. Start your club to-day.

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INTERESTING TO THOSE WHO HAVE TO SIT ON THE BACK SEATS.

### AN EXPLODED IDEA.

#### WHAT MY TRIP TO MAINE TAUGHT ME.

"Daoun East in Maine they pry the sun up with a crowbar" has long been an expression used as a remark of contempt in speaking of Maine and Maine people.

True! Maine has been accorded the distinction of raising and educating a Longfellow, a Blaine, a Hamlin and scores of others who have won more than a national reputation, but at the same time people in general have an idea that Maine is the "jumping off place" for the continent and so far "daoun east" that little good can come from there.

I must admit that I had held the same impression, but I must also confess that in one little Maine city I met and talked with many bright men, one of whom soon dispelled this deep rooted idea, and sent me home a wiser man, and hereafter there will be no greater champion of Maine men and Maine productions than I.

Last week I visited the Capital City of Maine, Augusta, for the first time in my life and after finishing the business that called me there, it was my good fortune to meet a man whose acquaintance I shall not soon forget.

I walked into his pleasant office, to find him surrounded by a corps of clerks and a score of pretty typewriters. He was seated at his desk busily engaged in looking through a voluminous correspondence, but on presenting my card and explaining the reason of my call, he consented to give me a few minutes of his valuable time. I began the conversation by asking him to tell me something about his birth, life, and his work for the people of this country. I will give you his words for it.

"I was born way down in the little country town of Canaan, in our good old State of Maine, and—"

"Excuse me, Doctor, but is your smiling happy face due to the fact of your having been born in 'Canaan'—'The Happy Land,' you know."

"Well, I do not know as to that, always ready to accept a joke, perhaps it is in part, but I attribute the greater part of it to the grand privilege I have had to better my fellowman. Well, to continue, I was kept at school, such as it was in those days, for a few months each year until I reached the age of fifteen, when I, as many other young men have done before and since, sickened of the farm and left it. I came to Augusta and secured employment. By working hard days and studying harder nights I saved a little and learned enough about medicine to enter a prominent university of medicine. There I was awarded, at the hands of my fellow students, the name which has clung to me ever since, OLD DR. BROWN."

"How was that, Doctor?"

"Well, you see, my name was Brown anyway, I had that to start with," he replied laughingly. "I was studying medicine and of course had the title of Doctor attached to me as soon as I started to earn that title, and the 'Old' was applied by my fellow students because, though young in years, I was older than they in the progress I had made in the science and because I always attended so closely to my studies. Possibly my earnest endeavors and close attention had brought some of the lines of age with it."

"Well, I graduated with high honors, and commenced to look for a field to settle in, but the roving disposition I had, pregnant in me prompted me to join an expedition for travel and research, as the surgeon of the party. I will not attempt to tell you all the travel and adventure I passed through or the discoveries I made in the twenty years I roamed all over the world. The demands of business will not allow the time."

"At last, I realized that I was getting along in years, had accumulated some money, and was a little weary of constant travel, and I decided to settle down and live comfortable for the rest of my days."

"After a few months of quiet I began to think I wanted work more than rest after all, and as a consequence you find me here, like the cat,



PAYING STRICT ATTENTION TO BUSINESS.

"While traveling in eastern countries I was very impatient with a well known general, whose name I will not, for family reasons, mention. I was with him for years and in all his affairs he made a confidante of me. He was grateful because my skill helped him many times, but I was unable to do for him all that his condition required."

"After a long companionship we drifted apart. Years had elapsed before I saw him again. I met him in the corridor of a splendid hotel in one of our large cities.

"But what a change—I hardly recognized in this splendid, vigorous man before me, the old friend who had parted from me a broken down, heartless man. Dragging me to his room, he seated me comfortably and over a fragrant cigar he unfolded to me the secret of his new lease on life.

"Well," he said, "I will first excuse myself for leaving you, my dear friend, in the abrupt manner, at which you must have wondered. I was, as you know, partly from intemperance and partly from the exposure to war and weather, a wreck. I hardly knew which way to turn, but somehow my steps were in the direction of the interior of Africa, for there I hoped to find solitude, even if isolation from civilization's pernicious habits could not restore health."

"I wandered far from the sound of human voice and was alone with the wild beasts and serpents of an unexplored country. I grew weaker and weaker from travel and exposure till one morning's sun found me thousands of miles from friends, home and country, and helpless.

"Great God! what was to become of me? My nerves were all on prickle; my brain on fire. However, I longed for life and strove for existence, but on what could I exist? In my madness I clutched at everything and caught at nothing, but while insane in my desires I was bound to live and start life over again. I happened while lying on the ground to touch my lips to a queer looking, odd shaped vegetable. After eating some the most strange feelings came to my nerves. I became soothed, my brain seemed cool and I grew calm. The nature of my being became changed. I ate of the plant and passed into a sweet, restful sleep, from which I must have been 24 hours waking. But how new everything was, how fresh and bright God's creatures were. The earth seemed beautiful, even here now. So I set myself to gathering the wonderful plant, and having an appetite now for good, pure food, I gained strength wonderfully."

"In a few days I was able to make my way to a native village. Then I secured twelve strong natives and with them returned and secured a large amount of it, resolving to benefit my poor countrymen and let them taste of its reviving qualities."

"Reaching civilization I commenced a series of experiments with the wonderful plant. I found many wonderful virtues contained therein. It was found

to be a great benefit to the Human Family, and there is now no danger of the extinction of our race. But it remains for you, my friend, to start this wonderful discovery on its mission of life giving. I have neither time, money or opportunity."

"This in short," said Dr. Brown, "is what keeps me busy here. I conducted further experiments, combined the foreign plant with the medicinal properties of a famous mineral spring, to which I added a desirable quantity of that famous Oxien, and have as a result what I have called Oxien because it gives the strength of an ox."

Liebig's Extract of Beef, and have as a result what I have called Oxien because it gives the strength of an ox.

"Do you wonder that I am always smiling and cheerful? That pile of letters and one like it each day bring blessings to me from every quarter of the globe. I have taken poor fellow creatures from the jaws of a mad house, insane from disease or strong drink, and with a few hundred Oxien tablets have returned them to the shop, the farm, the office, completely restored in mind and body."

"The poor rheumatic has appealed to me with palsied sinews and gnarled limbs, outstretching his deformed hands. I have placed in those hands a box of Oxien tablets and sent him forth as straight and well as in youth."

"Countless sufferers with wan check, foul breath, slowly dying from the poisonous catarrh, bless me for putting so simple a cure as Oxien within their reach."

"I have furnished it in quantities for use in institutions where special attention is given to nervous disease—who would not wear a smiling face to know that he had smoothed the pillow of many a poor weary creature, tortured and racked with weak nerves, and made out of them well men and women, eager to renew life's battle."

"A young lady writes me to-day that she has just passed the critical period and thanks God and Old Dr. Brown that with the taking of Oxien, nature has been aided in performing this change successfully and started her along toward a strong and healthy womanhood."

"Another lady writes, 'You have the praises of young mother and her dimpled babe now and forever. What would I have done without Oxien?' Every woman in this country should be apprised of the value of your truly good remedy."

"A poor woman here says, 'My only legacy was an impure blood with scrofulous taint. My mother suffered and died. This curse was all she had to leave me. By the use of Oxien I have driven this from my system and with it went the unsightly blots, freckles, pimples, black heads, muddy skin and left my face as fair and fresh as the Madonna.'

"How many are there who are obliged to be more careful what they eat, than would a mother be in feeding her babe. Any solid food brings to the poor sufferers the tortures of the damned. The poor dyspeptics who are obliged to take a 'back seat' at the table—their name is legion—I suggest to them Oxien. They accept the suggestion, take the Oxien. It goes to work in a sensible way. Starts right and soon the stomach is performing its functions with regularity and correctly too. The wise man suffers no longer, but takes Oxien and can eat heartily of any dish. I doubt not, I could take from yonder pile many letters from men and women who have at some time or other taken a back seat at the table."

"Well, Doctor, I feel well repaid for my call and am surprised that such a pleasant little tablet as Oxien is entitled to so much praise. I would have doubted it, had I not seen these letters from your grateful."

"I have not yet told you the greatest good I have accomplished with it," interrupted the doctor. "When La Grippe made its fearful presence known in our midst, I made several careful tests towards a cure. I found Oxien peculiarly adapted to fitting the system to withstand the advances of the monster. Even where it had attained a hold on the system, Oxien was able to step in and prove its supremacy, by curing the malady and driving out every trace of the sly but powerful tyrant. And when the millions who had escaped (?) as they thought, with only a 'touch,' found that touch still lingered with them, those who took refuge in Oxien alone were left unscathed. But I must say that I take the greatest pride in the cures Oxien has made on those persons who thought they had been cured entirely by physicians who called to their aid those powerful and dangerous German preparations, which while possibly they cured La Grippe, left the patient worse than before."

"Well, Doctor, you have good reasons for being a happy man and I assure you I will in my humble way do all in my power to spread the knowledge of your life giving food. But, may I ask, what method do you take to inform the suffering people of this boon?"

"Oh, I have an army of assistants. Three thousand agents located in the cities, towns and villages, are at my call and all stand ready to spread information of this character. I am in close personal correspondence with all and I assure you they are doing great good in talking the food up from house to house."

"Then I offer to send a sample free to any interested person, so no one need continue in ill health. And further, clergymen recommend it to their parishioners and even stand old members of that staid old profession (Medicine) do not hesitate to prescribe it to patients. Why, I can show you letter after letter from regular physicians commanding Oxien," and suiting his actions to his words he pulled from a pile of letters a strong testimonial from an old physician in New York State.

"Well, I have given you too much valuable time which belongs to my correspondents, but my only excuse is my zeal for the food," and as the doctor turned to his writing I rose to leave.

"Oh here, take a sample along with you, I am sending every one who writes Old Dr. Brown, Augusta, Maine, a sample free this month, so take yours now and tell your friends to send for free lot also."

"With more knowledge of this valuable food and a sample of it in my pocket I boarded the afternoon express and in a few hours was in my snug little office in Boston, meditating on the good that can come from small things."

S. T. CROSBY.

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THE glad feast of Xmas tide will soon be upon us and then for a brief time at least the world will put aside its schemes of self aggrandizement, halt in its pursuit of riches and lend attentive ear to that glorious message: "Peace on Earth Good Will to Men." The busy mart of commerce will be abandoned, the roar of the workshop will cease and the wheel will hang idle in the stream. This sweet respite will be but a brief one; but its wholesome effect upon the world will be most salutary. Xmas is pre-eminently a feast of hearts, of homes, of hearthstones. By its divine power all the world is resolved into one great family and Paul's words will be strikingly exemplified: For God hath made one blood all nations of men. Above all is the Xmas feast the one glad festival of all the year which brings most delight to the hearts of the young. In the Divine Child all the world is born again and in that glorious regeneration the human heart parts with its selfishness, gives up its cold and calculating ways and loves without setting conditions. All the world is kin to the Christian at this glad season of the year and he is ready to open his gates to the stranger, to set forth a bountiful feast, and to carry cheer and comfort to every household where they are lacking. The world for good reason might surrender up all its holidays, were this sweet and comforting festival but left to it.

Oh bells of Xmas, fond and dear,  
The night is spent, the morn is near.  
Call all the world to set its gifts  
Before His feet when daybreak lifts.

Even in the childhood of the world it was the custom to express love and devotion by means of gift-making. The idolater laid rich gifts in front of his graven image, the noble bore gifts to his prince, the peasant to his lord, the lover to his mistress, the slave to his master. But the gift was not only a token of reverence and respect, it was more, it was proof of the forgetfulness of self; it was a sacrifice, it was given freely and while it caused joy to the recipient, it purified, ennobled and strengthened the heart of the giver. The Old Testament is full of beautiful instances of gift-making, but not until the birth of the Divine Child did the world learn the full and deep import of gift-making as a means of lifting up the soul, of purifying the heart in the retort of unselfishness, of expressing a love too deep for words, a trustfulness beyond the power of language. For many centuries before the birth of our Saviour, the wise men of the East had searched most diligently for some cure for man's proneness to love himself better than his neighbor, for some method to touch the human heart and make all the world kin. But they had failed; their wisdom was great, yet they had toiled in vain and hence was it that when the star appeared in the December sky, they made haste to seek out the Divine Child, to open their treasures and lay before him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. These were the very first and most glorious of Xmas gifts. They had a deep and wonderful import. They were the first sign of the world's acceptance of the new faith and from that moment, a gift at Christmastime took on a sweet and holy significance. No other gift could ever hope to equal it in power to reach the human soul for its own good.

We are quite certain that the following little story will touch a sympathetic chord in the breasts of many of our readers. If it should succeed in having effect upon a single one of those good Christians who are too busy to think of their fellow creatures, it will not have been printed in vain. It is published now for the first time. The title of it is:

#### LITTLE TIM. TUCKER'S XMAS.

Little Tim was an errand boy in the office of William Hollister, a wealthy banker in the city of C. He had been there for nearly a year, for he had commenced work in January and it was now December. Tim was rather young to go to work, being only eight, but his father had died suddenly and there was no help for it, as there were two younger children than Tim and it was hard enough for his mother to support them. Tim was very proud to earn his own living and regularly every Saturday night he gave his mother the little envelope containing the four dollars. She never failed to kiss him and call him her "little man" and this made him still prouder. But there was one thing that made Tim unhappy at times and it was this: Mr. Hollister had never spoken a single word to him since he had been in his employment. True, Tim's duties never took him into the private office, but still it was necessary for Mr. Hollister to pass through the outer office to reach the private one, and Tim thought that it would only have been civil for Mr. Hollister to give a friendly nod and say good-morning once in a while. Well, it so happened that the very day before Christmas, the head clerk sent Tim into the private office for something, possibly the head clerk didn't think that Mr. Hollister was still there, for it was quite dark. But he was there; sitting at his desk with great piles of papers before him, looking terribly in earnest, he could not have looked more in earnest had he been reading his own death warrant. Tim looked at him and trembled and then made haste to get what he had been sent for; but just as he laid his hand on the door knob, a strange thought flashed across his mind. "Tomorrow," whispered Tim to himself, "will be Christmas. Why not wish Mr. Hollister a Merry Xmas?" Somehow or other, something gave the little fellow courage and facing about he looked straight at the rich banker and cried out in a cherry voice:

"Merry Christmas Mr. Hollister!" The banker never raised his eyes or moved a muscle. Tim was frightened half to death and shot out of the room all in a tremble.

"Good gracious," thought he. "What have I done? I've been very disrespectful; I'll be discharged. What a foolish boy I was!" When he reached home he was almost sick thinking over his rash act; but he took

good care not to let his poor mother know what he had done.

It was late that night when William Hollister entered the doorway of his spacious mansion in the upper part of the city. It had been a busy day with him, a certain piece of business had come into his hands by which he had made thousands of dollars, but in spite of this great good fortune, his big house seemed lonesome and dreary to him. He had several sons but they were not at home and after dinner as he and his wife sat down in front of the fire, his big house had never seemed quite so silent and lonesome to him. He fell into a doze for a few moments and then suddenly starting up as if he had been dreaming he called out:

"Wife, didn't you hear that? Who was that who wished me Merry Christmas?"

"Why, no one, husband, you have been dreaming," said Mrs. Hollister.

"No, no," cried the banker, "it can't be possible. I heard it so plainly, right here at my side, a child's voice, bright and cheery. Can it be possible I dreamt it? It sounded so natural, so sweet, so just like a boy! I can hear it yet saying: Merry Xmas, Mr. Hollister! Why, wife, it all comes back to me, 'twas Tim, yes, it was Tim!"

"Tim? Who is Tim?" asked Mrs. Hollister.

"Why, one of the boys at the office. I remember now, he came into my private room this afternoon late, just when I was reckoning up our share of the profits in that heir contract. Yes, it all comes back to me, as he turned to leave the room he called out: 'Merry Xmas, Mr. Hollister!' I was adding up a column of figures, our net profits, ten thousand dollars. I took no notice of him. Yes, there's where I heard it, it must have come back to me just as I fell off asleep, the same bright, cheery little voice: 'Merry Xmas Mr. Hollister!'"

"Why, where are you going husband?" asked Mrs. Hollister as he started for the door.

"To Tim's house!" was the reply. "I recollect where the Tucker's live. He was our old janitor," and before Mrs. Hollister could express her surprise at this sudden resolve, her husband had disappeared.

Tim sat rocking his little sister to sleep, almost asleep himself, when a knock startled him and as his mother opened the door and burst out "Mr. Hollister!" Tim's heart leaped into his throat. Throwing himself on his knees in front of the banker as the latter stepped into the room, Tim burst out with:

"Oh, Mr. Hollister, you have come to discharge me! I know you have! Oh forgive me this time, I'll never wish you Merry Xmas again, never, never, sir!"

"No, Tim," said the banker as he gently lifted the boy to his feet, "I have not come to discharge, I only dropped in to ask your pardon, Tim, for my rudeness this afternoon. I was very busy when you wished me a Merry Xmas, too busy for my own good (Tim couldn't understand this) and so I thought I'd call and wish mother a Merry Christmas too, and here's a little present for the door."

It was a fifty dollar bill and you may think what a right Merry Xmas little Tim and his mother and sisters had that year, and here ends the story of "Little Tim. Tucker's Christmas."

The most delightful characteristic of this festival of Xmas tide, is that it is in a great degree the glorification of childhood. And why should it not be? Does it not commemorate the birth of the Divine Child and was He not throughout His life a most ardent lover of children? Did He not take them into His arms and bless them? Did He not warn His people that in order to be completely worthy to be enrolled as His followers they must become as little children, that they must have a simple and childlike faith in Him and in His doctrines, that they must be, as it were, born again, that they must put away their so-called wisdom and sit at His feet as the child at its mother's? In a word, did He not when questioned as to who was the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven, call a little child unto Him and having set him in the midst of them, exclaim: Except ye become as little children ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven? But when once the dear Master no longer lingered among His followers to keep their faith childlike, to set up the sweet simplicity of His own character as a sampler for them, to preserve their hearts untouched by the vanities and weaknesses of the world, and more especially after the new faith began to outgrow its humble surroundings and

spread from land to land, marking its way by the building of proud temples and magnificent cathedrals and making its influence felt in every corner of the globe, then in those days of its grand triumphs, its glorious victories, did the haughty prelates forget that oft-repeated conjunction: Except ye become as little children ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven! The beautiful festival of the nativity of the Divine Child was in danger of losing much of its real loveliness as thoroughly and essentially a glad feast of childhood. What saved it from this fate, what gave back to it its full sweet significance? Who restored this fair Xmas tide to its rightful owners—the children? Let us look into the matter.

Many, many hundreds of years ago, about five hundred after the coming of our blessed Saviour, there lived a good bishop in the far distant land of Asia Minor, by the name of Nicholas, and so good was he even from his babyhood, and so many virtues did he display as he grew to man's estate, that his fame spread far and wide as the good bishop and the consequence was that when he died the people grieved so for him that the church made a saint of him and he became Saint Nicholas. Now, you must know that this good bishop had, his whole life long, been specially kind and loving to young people, to children, to schoolboys. What a delightful idea it was that the boys and girls should have a saint of their own, to whom they might appeal when hard pressed with a difficult lesson or when threatened with the ferrule? How consoling it must have been to a band of little ones lost in the woods to know that good Saint Nick was watching over them? Well, it so happened by the very best fortune in the world that this good bishop Nicholas was born on the sixth day of December; the consequence was that his birthday was so near to that of our blessed Saviour's that gradually it came to be celebrated on the same day—a most fortunate thing for many of the nations of the globe—we among them, for this restored to Christmas time that beautiful characteristic of a children's feast day, a season at which to reward good children and encourage naughty ones to be better in the future. Xmas always had been a festival of good humor, good cheer and good feeling; but now it became a delightfully gay and happy one, well deserving of its new title Merry Christmas! Merry Christmas! Could there be a more fitting word than "merry" to call it by? We trow not, and before we write any further let us set down something to amuse the little ones, to make them laugh, to remind them that Xmas tide is a glad feast and a merry one!

This curious tale was written expressly for our young readers and is entitled:

#### THE MERRY, MERRY XMAS OF THE FULL-BEARDED BAKER.

On a bright Xmas morn, it was all the town's talk

A full-bearded baker went out for a walk.

He trudged across town,

Climbed up hill and down,

His bread for to sell and his rolls for to hawk.

Now a maiden he met on the round hill top,

Not a mile and a half from his own bake shop,

And he planted a kiss.

On the check of the miss;

While down the hill basket rolled flippity-flop.

"A mad merry Xmas!" the baker he spake;

"How dare you bold baker such liberty take?"

She cried; "as I live

The kisses you give

Are by far not so nice as the kisses you bake."

The full-bearded baker thus did he impart:

"If only you'll promise to give me your heart.

The kisses I bake

Shall be yours to take,

My own and my dearest, till death us do part!"

Then the maiden she made him her prettiest bow

And vowed that she felt so—she didn't know how;

That same Xmas day

She pledged to obey

And a happier baker you couldn't find now!

ishments. Now you may see too where our Santa Claus gets his quaint garb and long white beard from. Of course when the English settled our country they brought this charming old custom over with them, but they were not the only people to bring Saint Nick over to Manhattan Island where the great city of New York now stands were extremely fond of Saint Nicholas and their descendants who now live on that island still keep the memory of the saint fresh and green in their hearts. It was a resident of New York who wrote that exquisite poem, almost as dear to American children as "Home Sweet Home," entitled "The Visit from St. Nicholas" and beginning:

"Twas the night before Xmas and all through the house  
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse."

Dear old Saint Nick, what happy days were those, those days of our youth, when the evil days came not and before the years drew nigh, when the fire blazed bright and warm on the old hearthstone and the children with parted lips and wide-opened eyes hung their stockings in the fireplace to be in readiness for the coming of the white-bearded Saint Nicholas! What blissful scenes were those when at day break the happy little faces were turned to catch proof of his having come down the chimney during the night to fill their stockings from his inexhaustible store! How true the poet's words: That heaven lies about us in our childhood! Come, then, dear season of love and good will, glad feast of hope and happiness, be with us like a star of promise, bring with thee balm for the bruised heart, comfort for the crushed soul; turn our thoughts away from self and fix them upon our neighbor and ever



brother who have not found health and happiness in this world! Make us children again, that our faith may be acceptable to the Divine Child, whose birth the glad bells are now proclaiming to all the world!

At a very early age, the new faith adopted the music of bells as one of the very voices of the church, so much so that the bell came to stand almost as a symbol of Christianity, and when Mohammed established his religion he forbade its use and ordered his priests to cry out the hours of prayer from the tops of the mosques. It is no wonder that the early Christians felt their hearts so deeply touched by the ringing of bells. There is something strangely, sadly, beautifully sweet and tender about their tone. They speak to the very soul, their music seems at times to drop from heaven, so tender, so delicate, so mysterious is it; and yet can it also be deep and mournful, loud and threatening. In fact, the ringer can transmit his own soul into it, and toll for the dead or sing gladly at the approach of bride and groom. The sound of bells at Xmas tide has ever been a comfort and a delight to the children of Christ, as they peal out in joyous song the tidings of the Saviour's birth! Hence it is most fitting that this Xmas greeting of ours should be ended by a peal from the lofty belfries where these mysterious instruments of sound hang with ready tongues and wide-opened mouths. At the beginning of this article we quoted a few verses from a poem entitled "The bells of Xmas tide," written for our journal. Without a doubt our readers will be glad to read the entire poem. Here it is:

#### THE BELLS OF XMAS TIDE.

Wake, bells of Xmas, sweet and mild,  
In Bethlehem's manger lies the child.  
 Swing in the belfries where ye hide  
 And peal the merry Xmas tide!  
 Call all the world to set its gifts  
 Before His feet when daybreak lifts.  
 Oh bells of Xmas, fond and dear,  
 The night is spent, the morn is near,  
 Swing in the belfries where ye hide,  
 Proclaim the glorious Xmas tide!

Peal out the faith, ye bells of steel,  
 That valiant Christian soldiers feel,  
 Ring out the tone from East to West  
 That served the templar's armed breast.

Ye brazen bells, proclaim His birth,  
 Good will to man and peace on earth,  
 And let the joyful messa sound  
 Until it girds the world around!

Oh brazen bells, fill all the air  
 With solemn summons unto prayer.

Ye bells of iron, give forth the cry  
 That made the martyrs smile and die,  
 Ring deep and strong, proclaim His birth  
 And call the old faith down to earth.

Warn, bells of iron, the listless souls  
 That drift amid perdition's shoals,  
 Swing silver bells in belfry tower  
 This Xmas morn, this holy hour,

Let man no more in darkness grope,  
 Ring out a peal of love and hope,  
 Of blessings which this day hath brought,  
 Of love that passeth human thought!

Oh, silver bells, ring hatred out,  
 And malice too and poisoning doubt,  
 Ring out deceit and falsehood's wiles,  
 Ring in pure hearts and honest smiles!

Ring mammon out and love of pelf,  
 Ring in forgetfulness of self,  
 Ring in that peace which reigns above,  
 Ring in a world of Christian love.

Wake, Xmas bells, so sweet and mild,  
 In Bethlehem's manger lies the child;

And from the belfries where ye hide  
 Peal forth the merry Xmas tide!

There is but one word more to be said and it is this: A merry, a right merry Christmas to COMFORT's army of readers and to each and all of them many returns of the glad New Year.

#### HOLIDAY PRESENTS.

We have a large number of elegant presents which we are going to give away to our club getters, besides and in addition to the regular premiums. To the sender of the largest club sent in each day we are to forward a valuable present during the next 30 days. Suits of clothes, sewing machines, albums, watches, dresses, clocks, roller organs and many articles of silverware and other goods are to be given away in this manner. It is an easy matter to obtain 25c. yearly subscribers to COMFORT, and all of our agents are meeting with phenomenal success. You will notice that this month we have added extra pages and will add many new features the coming months of '92 so take advantage of our liberal offers at the start.



But, cry a hundred little voices tell us where Santa Claus comes from! Well, dear children, you must know that Santa Claus is no other than the good bishop Nicholas by another name, and this was the way it all came about: When Nicholas the good bishop after his death had been made a saint, he became as all saints do, more popular in some countries than in others. This saint became a great favorite in the eastern countries particularly in Russia, where as you know they name almost every other child after him, and then his popularity spread through northern Europe and in Germany, the little Nicholas couldn't pronounce the long name Nicholas so they shortened it down to N'Klaus or Klaus and when the good name and fame of the saint entered England, the children gave him his real little "Saint Klaus" or Santa Claus! Now you see plainly where Santa Claus came from. In England Saint Klaus or Santa Claus was a great favorite with the schoolchildren even hundreds of years ago, and when his birthday came around, some one of the teachers was dressed up in a bishop's garb, a long gown and a long white beard and he went about among the schools and into the houses, too, and distributed sugar plums, nuts covered with gold foil and knicknacks of many sorts among the foal children, and then threatened the naughty ones with severe punish-



## MY DEAR COMFORT FRIENDS:

Merry Christmas to you all! Busy, every one, getting your gifts ready for dear friends and relations? Yes indeed, I know you are. But I want to tell you of the plan a friend of mine is going to carry out this year, and see what you think of it; perhaps it is not too late to persuade some of you to try her way. I am quite converted to it, myself. Some time in the summer, this lady announced to those of her friends with whom she was in the habit of exchanging gifts at Christmas time (by the way, it is this very system of exchange which spoils the spirit of the day), that she should give no presents this year, and wished to receive none, within her own circle. The money which she usually spends in this way, will be devoted to the poor and sick, and those to whom Christmas is only an empty name. This is carrying out the true idea of giving, as taught us by our Master. "But if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye?"—but do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again." "And the King shall answer and say unto them, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

Do not think that I would advise any one to ignore the ties of relationship and friendship so dear to all our hearts. This is not necessary. A loving note on Christmas morning will assure our friends of our remembrance; but the heart-burnings, the jealousies, the bitter feelings which our system of exchanging gifts inevitably arouses, will be replaced by the pleasure of giving where we "hope for nothing again," and the touching gratitude of the poor and lonely ones whom we have helped.

## "SHUT-IN" SOCIETY MEDICAL BUREAU.

For the purpose of aiding the poor and destitute to procure medical treatment and such other aid as our ability will allow, this society has been organized. Those applying for aid will be required to give a reference from pastor or physician, or some disinterested



## HERE SHE COMES.

party. "Shut-In" members annual fee, 25c.; associate, 50c. President, Anna Reed, P. O. Box 262, Covington, Indiana; vice-president, Frank Short, Nelson, Mich.; secretary and treasurer, Grace M. Pratt, Mukwonago, Wisc.; advisory and consulting physician, W. E. Anthony, M.D., 64 John St., Providence, R. I. All fees and donations should be sent to Miss Pratt. Now dear cousins, let us all try to make this society an aid and blessing to the poor and afflicted ones.

## ONLY.

Only a little wayside flower  
Blooming, will please the traveler's eye.  
Only a gentle summer shower  
Causes the brook to ripple by.  
Only a kind word, sweetly spoken,  
Brings a ray of hope to the heart.  
Only a habit, quickly broken,  
Helps us from error soon to part.  
Only a whisper of deep contrition.  
Raised to our Father's loving heart.  
Only a thought, ill, as a petition,  
Cast from conscience the stinging dart.  
Only a trust in our loving Saviour  
Helps us to bear the bluffs of life.  
Only a step across death's river,  
We are free from earthly strife.

L. E. BUFFINGTON.

I am going to let the cousins have a little talk together on the temperance question this month, as a great many letters have been received displaying an interest in that subject. All remember our Comfort Temperance Club, (President, Wm. Te Selle, Box 330, Sheboygan Falls, Wisc.)

"Some of the cousins, I see, write about novel reading, some about the temperance question, etc. Now, I shall try to say my say about the latter, for I think that drunkenness, or the whiskey habit, is the greatest curse that ever visited this earth; indeed, it is far worse than the ten plagues of Egypt, or anything I can call to mind. Why don't all Christian people unite, and, by the help of their leader, Jesus Christ, overthrow this greatest foe to civilization, this curse of our age, the demon of drink? O cousins and all good people, it lies with you, and you, to unite, and, with one mighty effort, forever overthrow Satan's power on earth. Let us appeal to our friends and to every person to unite with us, uproot and tear down saloons, and stop this great curse. Just think of the amount of money that is annually spent for intoxicating drinks. As has been said, 'Civilization means a small amount of gospel, and an overwhelming amount of whiskey.' Let us reverse this and make it read, 'a small amount of whiskey and an overwhelming amount of gospel.' Let us never cease in our trying till the dark clouds disappear which envelop us; and the blessed religion of the Lamb of God diffuses its sweet influence around us in dazzling splendor. Your nephew,

H. P. BELL, Big Bend, W. Va."

It is enough to do one's heart good to hear such earnest words from the young men on this important question. I hope many more are willing to take this stand.

"There are so many things about which to talk that I do not know just where to begin; but let us take a

peep at the 'Shut-Ins,' since everybody takes a look at them. I am thankful that I am not one of them; but I do not know how soon I may be called to their fate. I say *low*, not because I wish to cast any reflection upon them, but because theirs truly is a deplorable condition. We who have never been 'shut in' cannot fully realize how little of this world's pleasures they enjoy. If we would just imagine ourselves exactly in their predicament, I think we might get a better insight of the amount of trouble and anguish they have to endure. How often do we visit the seashore, the mountains, or some other place where we enjoy ourselves in the fullest sense of the word, and never one time think of our poor fellow-mortals who are unable to enjoy any such pleasure. Did you ever go to a 'Shut In' and offer to take him or her with you when you were going to some place of pleasure?

Let us notice next the subject of girls marrying men inclined to use intoxicating liquors. I know some of my lady cousins will not be pleased when they read what I have to say, but I cannot and will not tell them anything but the truth. One of the 'dear little innocent things'—the girls—has said, "It does not matter if he does drink." Now girls, permit me to give you a word of advice. I am a young man of twenty-two, and therefore ought to have some knowledge of young men. They will make you any promise under the sun to win your hand, and in less time than three months after they lead you to the marriage altar they are grander inebriates than ever. I heard a young man who was habituated to drink say that his girl had asked him to quit drinking 'for her sake' and therefore he could not take a drink publicly, but that after they were married he would take it as he pleased. Furthermore, to my own personal knowledge he would not speak the least harsh word in her presence and when away would, as the saying is, curse worse than a sailor. Girls, you may not know this fact, but I do; there are thousands of just such men as I have mentioned; let me ask you earnestly, for your own advantage, to never—*never*—marry a man on his promise to refrain from drink, *for your sake*. Let me ask you, would you willingly, knowingly marry a man whom you knew to be a drunkard, or a swearer, or a gambler? If you would, I say God pity you and give you better knowledge. For my part, I am a prohibitionist from my soul; and if I were a girl, no man whom I had any right to believe would under any circumstance, take any part in any of the above named or any similar dissipations, should so much as have the pleasure of a single conversation with me. I have known so many beautiful, worthy young ladies ruined by marrying drunkards, gamblers, and other low characterized men that I must say to the fair sex—and I hope they will heed my words—for Heaven's sake never marry a man with any of the above characteristics. Remember, marriage is for life, not a day or week; whatever you do 'look before you leap.'

One of the most pleasant things to me that has ever appeared in our column, is the determination of the ladies to put a stop to the killing of birds. God bless you, my friends, for taking such a step. Surely if the ladies would think how cruel it is to have them killed, they would never wear another. When I was a boy, I used to hunt a great deal, but since I became a man and took thought of how cruel it was to take the life of poor innocent little creatures, I have refrained from such a course. Now to follow suit with others, I will tell something of myself and surroundings. I am a young man of twenty-two, uneducated, and have to labor hard for what of this world's goods I obtain, but nevertheless enjoy myself well. I have no fears, for I know where there is a will there is a way. I live in the southeastern part of the State. Here farming is carried on somewhat. The pine forest is the great hindrance to agricultural pursuits; but it has been a great advantage to the people. The gathering of naval stores—tar, pitch and turpentine—has been the chief occupation of the eastern part of the State for many years; but the day is not far hence when the lumber mills will have destroyed the pines, and then, as matter of course, the people will seek other employment. The soil here is, like other alluvial regions, in some parts very fertile, and in others sterile; but taking the State as a whole, it is equal to any in the Union, for almost every plant that can be grown in the republic can be grown here.

In His Name,

JOHN A. TAYLOR, Clarkton, Bladen Co., N. C."

There is some good sensible advice in that letter, girls, and I hope those of you who are encouraging the attentions of fast young men will profit by it. Men generally understand their own sex pretty well, and you may be sure that our Carolina cousin knows what he is talking about.

"I am an Indiana boy. I have to work for my living and consequently I have not much spare time. The column I like best is the chats, I think we can learn so much from them. I think Wm. Te Selle's temperance club is a grand club. Long may it prosper. There's always work for temperance workers, as the field is large and the laborers few. If all the girls would resolve not to let the lips that touch intoxicating liquors and tobacco touch theirs, and keep their resolve, it would possibly be a good thing, as the boys would not like to be left out in the cold, and would try to reform. I never drank any intoxicating liquors or used tobacco, and I have resolved I never should.

"I am an old bachelor, but it gives me great pleasure to read the letters in COMFORT from the young all over this great land of ours. It (COMFORT) does more than that, it has kept me in my room all this blessed Sunday—where from? you ask—the saloons. Just think, little COMFORT has opened my eyes to see what a—I have been. I live in California, the land of fruit, grain, honey and gold. Any where in the U. S. is God's country, but California is the first in the rank of all. All kinds of soil are to be found within its borders, and I might say too, all the different climates to be found in the U. S. Here on the sea coast there is very little change in the summer from the winter months; in the great Redwood saw mills on the bay it is not unusual to see men at work in the summer months with coat and vest on,

when a few miles back in the woods it is pretty warm to work at all. If there are any who are having the California fever I will be placing myself in the interests of the State to encourage all who have some means to come and settle. Yours,

A. L. STUART, Box 289, Eureka, Calif."

Our little COMFORT has been doing a world of good all over the States, why not renew your own subscriptions today and also give it as a Christmas Present to your friends. The 25 cent pieces invested will bring them much happiness.

"Cousin William Thamas, I should like to shake hands with you. You are a man, if you are a curiosity. You have reason to be thankful for the mother that was given you. It would be a grand, a glorious thing if all the cousins would take the pledge of total abstinence. Oh, that I could write as with a burning pen, to make a lasting impression, these words: *'Never take the first drink!'* This is the surest way to escape a drunkard's grave. Tremble before the first step, for with it the other steps to your first fall are taken, and the succeeding ones to your ruin in time and eternity made easy. And you who have children in your care, do not fail to show them the right way in this matter, lest some day the eyes now so bright look at you bleared and bloodshot, while the lips now so pure tremblingly ask, 'why did you not tell me?'

ERNESTINE SCHAUER, Juncad, Wisc."

We must always give space for those interesting descriptive letters, in which the cousins tell about their homes, and learn of each other's surroundings, thus becoming better acquainted. Some of those will be in order now.

"I wrote you a partial description of our lovely valley of the Grand River some time ago. I will now try and give you a more minute description of this county, (Mesa.) The Grand Valley is situated on the Grand River, extending up and down for a distance of 35 miles; it is from 10 to 25 miles wide; it is within the finest fruit growing belt of the State. Peach Day was celebrated in Grand Junction the 15th of Sept. It was the first day of the kind that was ever observed in this State. Colorado seems to have been the first State to set the example for commemorating days for special products. First, Rocky Ford had its Watermelon Day; then Monument, on the divide, established its Potato Bake Day, and now Grand Junction followed with its Peach Day. Gov. Routt and his staff graced the occasion; people from every city, town and station were here to enjoy the feast of free peaches. Five tons of peaches were put up in tempting pyramids and handed around in baskets gaily decorated with ribbon to the vast crowd. Yet only six short years ago where G. J. now stands, was reported by a leading newspaper man as a dreary waste of sand and cactus and sage brush. We now have irrigating ditches which afford plenty of water for irrigation, and the growth of fruit trees here is wonderful, some bearing fine fruit at 3 years old. The showing which Grand Junction made at the Horticultural Pavilion on Peach Day is but a suggestion of the possibilities of the great Grand River Valley. It demonstrated that in this rich valley can be raised in lavish abundance all the fruits that grow in Southern Cal. and Arizona, except the orange, lemon and olive. We are very fortunate in having a market at home, as it were. With the large city population which Colorado has and always must have, there is no danger that fruit will be left to rot in the orchard. The climate here is adapted to persons with weak lungs, for it is very dry as a general thing, and the winters are not long and are mild, snow never lasting longer than 2 or 3 days at a time. In conclusion I will say that I am not praising the country more than it deserves. Any one that comes West will have to learn a hard lesson, that is, to do without a great many luxuries that they have been accustomed to; but if one is willing to 'brave it out' and not fret over things, by and by they will have a comfortable home surrounded with plenty in a very short time, if they manage right.

Mrs. ALICE KELLAR,

Grand Junction, Colo."

"I live in the world-renowned, grand old Catskill, which Nature has endowed with so much beauty, only a few miles from the Overlook Mountain House, where you can get the finest view there is of the low lands and the majestic Hudson. Further on is Twilight Park. In the distance are the picturesque Kauterskill Falls, with the Laurel House in the background. The grand old mountains tower heavenward, while below is an awful gulf and Haines Falls. In looking from this rustic bridge down into this impressive chasm, one is filled with awe and solemnity at the depth and grandeur of the scene. Romantic cottages have been erected for the comfort of visitors, also some simple, rustic log cabins (which remind us of the pioneer days); stepping inside we find the old fireplace, small stained windows, plain simple furniture, and bare floors, and one is loth to leave, for everything is so quaint and ancient looking. But we must step outside again and feast on the wild scenes about us; the dense forest, the rocks in their massive forms, and perchance a squirrel or woodchuck, with the merry songsters making the air melodious with their warbles. In moving on we behold a gap in the mountains, giving us a glimpse into another world, (as it seems) of a wide range of country, mountains in the distance, hills and valleys, cottages, and finer residences, rivers and streams flowing on into that great unbounded ocean. Going on we come to the Hotel Kauterskill, the largest and most modern mountain house in the world, also the Catskill House with its lakes and own natural beauty. Perhaps I am tiring you with my mountain descriptions; but if any of you come this way, just stop and see some of the beauties I am boasting of, and I know you will enjoy it. I am very fond of reading and hearing of the beauties of Nature and every State has its own, so I wish some cousin from every State in this grand republic would write me an interesting, instructive letter about their own State, its particular beauties, etc. I have visited several beautiful spots on this broad footstool, and if fortune leaves me a legacy, I shall see much more of the handiwork of Nature, which proclaims in a thousand ways the Creator's greatness. Please write.

CARRIE A. MILLER, Bearsville, Ulster Co., N. Y."

"I live away up here among the beautiful mountains of North Carolina. The highest mountains east of the Mississippi are situated in this State. This is one of the leading States in the production of tobacco, flax, hemp and all kinds of grain. The vine, fig and peach, with other orchard fruits, are produced, as well as melons, peanuts and sweet potatoes. In the southern sections cotton is extensively cultivated. And this country is progressing very much in the education of her people. Would some of the cousins and Auntie, too, appreciate a few words about the Indians? I live inside of the Indian boundary, and surrounded by a band of Cherokees. Their customs and manners are somewhat amusing. The squaws are seen trudging along with very heavy bundles tied on their backs, consisting of the young Indian, produce, etc., while the men follow along behind with blow gun and arrows, killing birds, or throwing stones at some hornet's nest they may chance to see on the roadside, from two to four half-starved dogs at their feet complete the scene. The Government is endeavoring to educate the Indians here, but finds it hard to turn them from their old ways. Respectfully,

ROBT. CHILDERS, Birdtown, N. C."

"So many are describing their homeland, I thought too would tell you of our lovely Western country. We live in Southern Wisc., in the county of Green, and in one of the southern townships of the county. The State line separating Wisc. and Ill. is but 2 1/2 miles south of us. The country is pleasantly diversified by strips of heavy timber (or it was heavy ere the woodman's ax made sad havoc there) and rolling prairie. Monroe is our county seat, and it is said to be situated on the highest ground between Lake Michigan and the Mississippi river, or 1,083 feet above sea level. The heart of the city is occupied by

the Public Square, in the center of which our new \$35,000 court house is being built. The streets are lighted by electricity. The water supply is found in two large wells, which are dug down into the rock formation called St. Peter's sandstone, (which our State geologist says is the best water supplying rock in the State.) The water is forced (by steam) to the top of a high stand-pipe in Lincoln Park and from there distributed in mains under ground to all parts of the city. The Milwaukee & St. Paul R. R. and the Ill. Central both have nice depots and abundant freight accommodations within the city limits. Green Co. is composed of 16 townships, each 6 miles square. Thousands of cows are milked in this county and the milk carried every morning and evening to the numerous cheese factories, and to the condensed milk factory at Monroe. The county is famous for its cheese of various kinds, American Swiss, Brick and the highly perfumed Limburger. Through the eastern part of our county the Sugar River flows, and through the southwestern part the Pecatonica. These rivers abound in shells, 'pearl shell,' indeed and in truth. It is but two years since it became known that the shells in these rivers held many fortunes in their embrace. I will quote a few lines from one of our last week's papers, (Albany is in our county.) 'Editor Thorp of the Albany, Wis. Journal says the pearl hunting interest of that point is by no means dead yet. A man named Murry found five gems in one day recently, and refused \$600 for them. Mr. Thorp says it is estimated that not less than \$175,000 has been paid to Albany people for pearls during the past two years. One gem sold for \$7,000 and is now in Paris, where it is reputed to be the finest in the world.'

Box 93, Monroe, Wis."

"I like to give a helping hand to those in need, but I quite agree with Lone Star, there are very few of us who have not one dark cloud in all our lives, but it should not make others unhappy. We have sympathy for you all, my dear afflicted friends, but look to the bright side. I live in the anthracite coal regions and have been down the mines often. You can walk down some, but more often you go down on a cage or car. When you are once down, you cannot see your hand before you, unless you have a mining lamp or a lantern, and then only a short distance. It is a dark dismal place; people in large cities do not know what hardships the poor miners have, to dig, and the breaker boys to pick the slate out of the coal they use with comfort. With kind regards to all my cousins, I am respectfully,

Mrs. GEO. BECK,

522 W. Centre St., Mahanoy City, Penn."

Thank you for the samples you so kindly sent; they were very pretty.

"Southern Louisiana is a vast field of waving cane. The tall smoke-stacks of 1,200 factories rise above the clustered roofs of as many plantations. Villages and towns have everywhere arisen under the stimulus of the industry, and the country appears to be teeming with wealth. The planters live in beautiful villas or roomy old Creole residences, rising amid parks and avenues of magnificent live-oaks hung with flowing moss, or surrounded by dark green groves of orange or lemon. They dispense a hospitality which has become proverbial in both continents. They are generally characterized by extravagance in their manner of living. In winter they resort to the expensive hotels of New Orleans, and devote themselves to the social and carnival festivities of the fashionable capital of their section. In summer there is a great exodus to Northern springs and watering-places, or across the Atlantic on European tours. Is



## ALL READY.

OLD LADY: GOOD GRACIOUS SAKES ALIVE BOYS! WHAT'S HAPPENED!

seems as if a landed aristocracy is arising in this section, to rival the baronial magnificence of medieval times. I hope we will soon hear from our cousin Mr. De Vere. I will ask an Indian boy to correspond with me. 'Votre neveu Louisianais.'

R. H. PLAISANCE, Convent P. O., St. James, La."

The cousins have been demanding bright, cheery letters, and here I find one which just answers to that description.

"May I poke my nose in here? Do you care for a new acquaintance? 'Who am I?' I'll produce my references in a minute, if they are not satisfactory, give me the cold shoulder, and I'll step quietly out again. Though for many years a resident of Connecticut, I was born in the smoky old manufacturing town of Birmingham, England. The house in Ingby St. where these eyes first saw daylight (or I think it was lamplight) has at present no marble slab to my precious memory. This cold world takes creatures like me for granted. But revenge may come—who knows—the very bricks of that forgotten house may yet fetch their weight in gold. In fact I advise any one contemplating a European trip, to visit that Ingby St. house at once and secure a few bricks while they are cheap, 'twould be a good business investment. But ere you start, let me be candid with you. I am not sure I was born there at all. That is, I don't remember it. It is one of the few things I have to take for granted. One of the first things I do remember was in another house, opposite to Gillott's steel pen factory. You all know Gillott's steel pens, so now you half know me, don't you, for I lived opposite in a little brick house up an entry. Gentle readers, I am sorry to make the confession, but the first picture my memory furnishes in the camera-like vision of my life, is of a naughty little girl outside a green door, kicking and crying with all her might. I'm afraid of that cold shoulder of yours now, but truth must be told in this case.

"My parents, through no fault of theirs, were very poor. I've heard of such a thing as the tablecloth being shaken out at the back door at dinner time to give to the neighbors an appearance as if we had dined, when our empty stomachs denied the fact. I have heard how the same cloth was spread in despair when there was nothing to put upon it, and how the prayer went up, 'Give us this day our daily bread,' and how surprised everybody was when there was a rap at the door, and a person came to pay an old debt of two shillings, which Godsend furnished our much needed meal. I say, how surprised we all were, people usually are, strange to say, when their prayers are answered.

"Such poverty is very pitiable, yet do not think I was unhappy. Oh no, I was a child. I had no care. A dyspeptic king might envy my enjoyment while I sat on the doorstep eating a thick slice of bread and butter. Occasionally I longed for toys from Santa Claus; while he never forgot us, we were six all told, rarely brought anything more costly than a handful of nuts and candy. How I longed for a doll carriage! Well, father said one day, 'I'll tell you how you can get a doll carriage; you go without eating for a week, and I'll buy you one.' 'I'll do it,' I said at once,



## EACH COUSIN A SANTA CLAUS.

If you have not time to obtain New Subscribers, let each cousin become a Santa Claus. What better gift than a 25c. yearly subscription to our monthly can give yourself or friend, and if it is so you can get up Club and obtain an elegant Album, Tea Set or other valuable articles Free. You also stand a chance of receiving a \$55. Sewing Machine, Watch, Clock or one of the many other presents that we are to give in addition to regular premium offers. Better try now.

what was ending compared to that inward longing! The bargain was struck. The next day was Sunday, I came down to breakfast a little late. What did I behold on the table—toast! What a luxury! I always did love toast. In a moment I was munching a brown crisp slice, entirely forgetful of my recent vow. My father watched me awhile with twinkling eyes, then slyly inquired, "How about that doll carriage?" I dropped my toast, my face dropped too. "I forgot," I said meekly, and looked doubtfully at the toast and at my father. "I think you had better finish your breakfast," he said; and rather gladly I did, though my disappointment was great. It had seemed so easy not to eat. How nice it would be now to say that the carriage came after all, but oh no, it never did, there was nothing to spare for such trifles. But lest I tire your patience let me say briefly, that matters grew worse and worse till a crisis happened which sent us to this beloved land where honest labor is rewarded and ability recognized. Should you care to follow the child across the ocean, she remembers many things concerning that three weeks' voyage? Those in favor say 'Aye.' F. E. M., Wallingford, Conn.

I shall say Aye, for one; and am quite sure that most of the cousins will follow my example.

"To Aunt Minerva and the cousins, greetings! Abbie C. Purdy, give us your hand. Nothing in COMFORT has pleased me better than your little communication. While beauty of face and figure are oftentimes combined with sense, what man of sound judgment but would prefer brilliant intellect and true heart goodness to a dull faced fool. I am not for woman's rights, but I am for right women. And cousins, do not suppose for one moment that our good Editor, with his sound, sensible Editorials, ever published Rose Terry Cook's article because he endorsed its sentiment. Simply a challenge, girls. Speak, Samantha, speak! Many things in COMFORT are pleasant, the letters especially, and I must have it another year. Mrs. A. SLAWSON, Perryburg, N. Y."

Our idea for a Comfort Reunion seems to be meeting with favor, and here is a letter from our friend Mrs. Kupferle about it. We will all call on her when we get there, and then she will wish that she had not urged us so strongly to come!

Dear Aunt Minerva:—I see the owls are blinky and look sleepy, but you are wide awake and will let me chat with you and the cousins awhile. I think if we would all condense our letters as much as possible, we would be more apt to get a chat with each other. Auntie, some time ago you spoke of a reunion of the cousins in some city. I think it would be lovely and Chicago will be the best place to meet. Let it be in '93 at World's Fair, and in Sept.; we have such lovely fall weather here that all could have an enjoyable time and kill two birds with one stone. We would go to the exposition in a body so none could get lost, strayed, or stolen. I think the majority will vote for Chicago. Now, cousins, what do you say? I went out to pay Jackson Park a visit a few days ago; that is the site for the exposition. 'Tis a lovely place on the Lake Shore. Nature has done so much for Jackson Park; the lake is a grand sight and lovely sheet of sky blue water, and pleasure boats make short trips every half hour with bands of music for those that trip the light fantastic toe; and when they return to the pier all the excursionists look so happy. There is a lovely pavilion at the pier where all kinds of refreshments can be had. All along the shore for miles is a white stone walk, where those that wish to promenade can have a delightful walk, and can walk abreast. All along the walk are tees and easy chairs, and you will see many young people sitting there laughing and billing and cooing; they are so interested that they never notice those more sober and sedate. Others are buried in some kind of literature, but all look happy. The air is very bracing, and I prefer it to the salt air. A few blocks from there you come to Washington Park, and that is a world of lovely flowers. In the center of the park is a large mound several blocks in circumference, and sloping from all sides are beautiful designs in flowers, such as grandfather's clock, gates ajar, the Bible, crescents, Maltese cross, rolls of Brussels carpet, and large Turkish rugs, Japanese fans, and the most artistic of all is the calendar; it points out every day of the month; the figures are in pots and changed every morning. It is the loveliest spot I ever visited; so many nice little nooks everywhere to sit and rest, all kinds of rustic bridges and miniature lakes full of gold fish which are so tame they come and eat crumbs out of your hand. We have many other lovely parks, but this is the gem of them all. I think Chicago has a great future and is destined to be the first city of our glorious land. The people here are all energy and vim; there is no such word as fail to them when they undertake any kind of an enterprise. Now I think I hear Auntie saying, Mrs. Kupferle better practice what she preaches, short letters. What has become of the cousins' Temperance Union? I have had only one call for membership. Now cousins, don't be so slow in coming to the front; let us pull together and do some good if we can. I have a large correspondence among the cousins and I love to hear from all. This plan of Auntie's is a new, novel, and interesting way of making friends and I enjoy it ever so much. God bless and care for our "Shut-in" friends; would like to hear from all.

Mrs. SOPHIA KUPFERLE,  
74 South Morgan, Chicago, Ill.

Now we must close our pleasant talks. When we come together again, it will be in the New Year; and as we want to start in with as large and happy band as possible, let each one obtain at least one new subscriber at a Christmas or New Years offering to Comforer for the Editor informs me that starting with the January No. illustrated articles, descriptive of the glorious World's Fair will be commenced, for it will require more than one year to give the Cousins any sort of idea of the magnitude of the wonderful exhibition that will require so many millions of dollars to inaugurate and if possible let each Cousin constitute a "Santa Claus" so that the stockings can all contain a copy of COMFORT.

I will leave you this time with my best wishes for the holiday season.

AUNT MINERVA,  
(Care of COMFORT.)

## LA GRIPPE CURE FREE.

If you will write Old Dr. Brown, Augusta, Maine, he will send you a remedy he has found to be a positive preventive and cure for that dreaded disease which has stricken down so many millions with that awful coughing, sneezing, backaching malady.

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2.

"Dunno as I blame her," said Teena, "it's seven years since the old general died. I was second girl then, and I know for a fact how Miss Celia persuaded him to alter his will and leave money to Miss Grace, that's what she was then, well, I don't guess she could a' been more's seventeen then. And I remember how after they had sent the telegrams they waited and waited. And the general made Miss Celia get out the papers and find out about trains. It was only from Chicago, for they were there then. And he'd keep asking the time saying, 'Do you think she'll come this time, daughter?' He did it till the hour before he died, for Miss Celia never showed him the telegram she got."

"Yes, I remember," said Maddox, who had heard the story plenty of times before.

But it was the first time for Lizzie, the other auditor, who was curious. "Didn't Miss Celia ever show the telegram?" said she.

"No, but I know, I knew the telegraph man and he told me. It said, 'I cannot come,' and not another word."

"So he died," said Lizzie in an awestruck voice, "and without seeing her? Goodness me!"

"Yes, but the last words he said before he fell asleep and he never rightly did wake up from that sleep, was to give little Gracie his love. He was sorta wandering then and kept thinking she was just a little thing."

"And did Miss Celia give her his love?"

"You better b'lieve she didn't," said Teena energetically, "nor me neither if I'd been in her place. And I don't blame her if she never speaks a mortal word to her."

"But she was so young," urged the more merciful Maddox, "and you and I know, Teena, that young girls is awful fools."

So the philosophers in the kitchen discussed her tragedy, while alone over the gray ashes of the fire, Miss Celia watched all night through with her memories.

She went back step by step through the quarrels. Did they look so unpardonable now that the slight creature that had caused them was past all mischievous in her grave?

Vain, selfish, ignorant, playing with a grave man's honor as if it were tinsel, taking to hysterics and her bed whenever her husband refused her anything, flying into tropical rages and equally tropical remorse, frantically jealous of little Grace's affection for her sister, and utterly reckless in her wiles to win the child, yet generous, devoted to Grace a creature without a conscience, surely, but not without a heart. "I never liked her, I could not like her anywhere," said Celia honestly, "but I might have been kinder to her."

And even the end did not seem so inconceivably black as before. What could this brilliant little creole who never could keep the principles of the two parties distinct, know about public honesty or public honor? She took the tremendous bribe offered her quite complacently until she perceived her husband's horror. And he—he extracted his wife at the expense of his own stainless reputation. He saved her—and never forgave her.

Neither had Celia forgiven her until now. But Grace, Grace was different. If she was her mother's daughter, so too, was she her father's, with his very eyes and smile, his very courage Celia knew well, (for do you suppose she had not listened eagerly, to the talk about her sister? Listened, looking the other way, and not seeming to hear) his honor and his pride.

The chimes were ringing again:

"Star of wonder, star of light,

Star with glorious beauty bright,

Westward leading, still proceeding.

Guide us to the perfect light!"

Miss Celia knelt down sobbing: "I can't feel it is right to forgive her, I can't! I can't!"

## CHAPTER II.

Beggy's donkey and cart were waiting for him in the morning, so was his miniature typewriter as well as a gaudy company of books and toys; and in the first rapture of his riches he seemed to have forgotten any other desire.

It is true there was one dampening moment when he stood searching every corner of the room, in a single, blank, solemn glance. But it was only a moment; he said not a word, and then he was off for his donkey, howling and skipping with joy.

Miss Celia (who looked pale though smiling) went away to church, quite relieved about him. Privately, I think Miss Celia would have given a pretty penny to the poor box could she thus have purchased leave to stay at home. She dreaded the leisure to think, the music with its memories, the softening influences of the season. Miss Celia did not want to be softened, she wanted to be hardened. But there would be the talk if such a regular attendant stayed away, and there were the Rollins invited to dinner. Miss Celia donned her black velvet gown and fastened her laces with her diamond brooch and put a large white silk handkerchief over them under her pelisse, and Maddox tied her bonnet strings and gave her a new pair of gloves out of the sachet; and she went to church.

How much or how little the service and the sermon did for Miss Celia's soul, I cannot say; but I know that she fixed her mind sternly on certain worldly subjects (for instance, Beggy's kindergarten) and heard as little as Dr. Rollins' melodious and magnetic voice would let her, about "the greatest of these."

The Rollins were late in joining her in the vestiture; the reason for which instantly appeared, in spite of Mrs. Rollins' warning elbow.

"You must excuse us, Miss Wilder," said the rector, "the fact is Mrs. Dubarry was just telling us, Mrs. Brace's little girl has been kidnapped." Here, aware of the elbow, he turned his mild, inquiring countenance on his wife.

She certainly was not so conscientious as he for she asked him if he wasn't on her skirt—which was he nowhere near, and then took the kidnapping business out of his hands.

"If she has any heart at all," thought Mrs. Rollins, "she'll want to hear about a kidnapped child!" "Yes, Miss Wilder, (aloud) isn't it awful! It is the most mysterious thing, too. Her father was walking up and down the hill with her—just to let her try her new tricycle—and almost opposite their own drive, you know how the hills slope up on that side the street, and how far back the house is, so you can see it from the sidewalk—well, do you know? the little thing wanted to run home, a minute, to get something or other to show a playmate that she saw; my dear, she ran up that asphalt drive, with her father watching her, and into the shadow of the stone porch—you know how dark it is with those heavy pillars and the arch and all; she ran there—and that was the last seen of her!"

"I don't understand," said Miss Celia, "shan't we walk?"

They walked on, Dr. Rollins in his turn explaining.

"Mr. Brace, of course, thought the child was safe. In the house, they supposed she was with him. He met—well, Miss Wilder, it was I whom he met and we chatted together pleasantly, he is a very cultivated, noble young fellow, Mr. Brace." (Dr. Rollins could not resist the opportunity) "and not a bit spoiled by his money; I like to talk to him. After he left me, he returned to the house, and then, for the first time discovered that the child was missing. No one had seen her since she left with her father. There was instant search and inquiry. Nothing was found. Only as nearly as they could calculate at the time of Gracie's disappearance, a veiled woman in a long cloak was hanging about the yard."

"I don't believe she took the child," said Mrs. Rollins, "people don't rig themselves up in striking clothes when they are going to kidnap babies."

Miss Celia asked no questions, but inwardly she was in a flame. Had it been any other woman in the town, she would have sent Feretze with proffers of sympathy and aid, now, she was silent, she let the talk flow over as a rock does not resist the high tide.

At dinner the very servants were agitated. She could catch whispers in the butler's pantry. Elina, the Swedish nursemaid, had stopped at the kitchen in passing, to tell her story of grief and frantic search. The police were scouring the town and the two towns across the river. Every house in the neighborhood had been visited, every foot of the Brace's house and stable searched. While they sat at table, with the flowers and light, they could hear the crier shouting a description of the lost child, and presently they saw a boy run by over the snow, with his arms heaped with posters.

Dr. Rollins said, "That is the boy from the printing office with the offer of the reward. Five hundred dollars offered. They will be pasted all over the city before nightfall." He had just returned from searching.

[CONTINUED ON PAGE 12.]

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PILLOW SHAM HOLDER. Do not pay 2 or 3 dollars for a pillow sham holder. Mine are in sets of three, nicely nickel plated, with screws complete and directions for putting up. They will last a lifetime. Mailed postpaid to any address for 10c. a set; 1 doz 10 CENTS sets 75c. Agents wanted. T. M. GANDY, Cedarville, Conn.

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## PRIZE ESSAY.

Several prizes were awarded last month to the Essay Club, and we can only find space for one short article this month and will present another one each, in January and February numbers.

## ADAM BEDE.

There is a quality of truth pervading George Eliot's novels. They are not works of imagination entirely, rather copies of real life. I do not mean that all her characters are real. The highest praise she has received compares her genius to Shakespeare's, like his if won acknowledgement without social position and personal influence.

"Adam Bede" represents the humble English life, pictured by a master hand, and is valued for its truth to nature. It is also of historical interest.

The hero, Adam Bede, is a type of the author's father, and is a faithful, hard working carpenter. He falls in love with a beautiful girl of his own class, who is vain and silly. Her beauty seemed made to turn men's heads, she is so innocently bewitching. But she has already fallen in love with the young squire of the village, a good-natured, kind-hearted fellow, but thoughtless and lacking in strength of character. Adam discovers the attachment between Hetty Sorrel and the young squire, and is not able to control his anger and jealousy. He quarrels with the squire and knocks him down, and makes him promise not to see Hetty again, and to write her a letter explaining that he can never marry her because his station in life is so much higher than hers. This letter of cruel disappointment nearly crushes her. The squire has duties which call him away from the village, and he does not return there to live for many years.

Hetty strangely accepts the renewed attentions of Adam. "The noblest nature is often blinded to the character of the woman's soul that beauty clothes."

At last Hetty cannot stand it any longer and she runs away. The tragic part of the novel is a vivid painting of her dreary wanderings and terrible sufferings as a ruined girl and her trial for abandoning to death her infant child. The inexorable law of fate drives her into obscurity from which she never returns.

The humor of the novel is in the finely-painted character of Mrs. Poyser. She is represented as a shrewd and thrifty English farmer's wife, and the maker of many trite and witty remarks. One of these is, "It's but little good you'll do awatering the last year's crops."

Dinah Morris, the heroine, a niece of Mrs. Poyser's, is a Methodist preacher. The art of fiction has nothing more touching or elevated than the delineation of the motives that moved Dinah in her religious life. In speaking to Mr. Irwine about her vocation, she says, "Sometimes it seemed as if speech came to me without any will of my own, and words were given to me that came out as the tears come, because our hearts are full and we can't help it. I had never thought it could be so with me before a congregation of people. But we are led on by a way that we know not. I was called to preach quite suddenly, and since then I have never been left in doubt about the work that was laid upon me."

Mr. Irwine, the village rector, was one of those few men who are best known in their home life, where they show thoughtful care for the daily wants of daily companions.

Adam's brother Seth, a weaker character, is deeply in love with Dinah, but she refuses to become his wife, and afterwards she falls in love with Adam, who has learned to adore her. Their mutual love is a beautiful thing, showing how love's divine elements can animate the heart in all the conditions of life.

Dinah says to Adam, "My life is so knit to yours that it is but a divided life I live without you."

The story closes with a finely-drawn picture of Dinah and her two little ones accompanied by Uncle Seth, going to meet Adam as he comes from his work. "To walk by Dinah's side, and be tyrannized over by Dinah's and Adam's children, was Uncle Seth's earthly happiness." Mrs. C. S. HUBBARD, Ottawa, Ills.

## BIG MONEY FOR AGENTS.

A \$50 appointment on 30 days time, guarantee \$150 profit in four weeks or no pay. Free sample for stamp. Address.

C. F. SHOOP & CO., Racine, Wis.

## HEALTH IS WEALTH.

Can people at a distance be successfully treated for Nervous disorders? Certainly. We are now treating thousands of patients all over this continent and only ask you to read our methods. We furnish the best of references.

Address, ALBION PHARMACY CO., Lock Box 80, Albion, Mich.

**\$3. PAID** per 1,000 for distributing circulars, MALENA CO., Warriors' Mark, Pa.

**LADY AGENTS** to sell new and beautiful goods. Address Mrs. N. B. LITTLE, Chicago, Ill.

**GAME** of "Patriots" is all the go. Exciting, Amusing, Historical. 50c. A. R. Goodspeed, Dwight, Ill.

**HOW** to play the Guitar without notes or teacher. Add. Prof. MURDOCK, Cleveland, O.

**CARDS** 450 Sample, Verses, &c. Fall Agts. Quarto, 15 p. Sample Book, Name Reversing, Order of Letters, and present all 50. Name Book. GLOBE CARD CO., Box 12, Cesterbrook, Conn.

**Guitar** of BANJO straught without NOTES with HOWE'S CHARTS. 50c. set (24). Circular free. E. C. HOWE, B 37, Three Oaks, Mich.

**SHORT** HAND taught by mail successfully. 50 pupils wanted. Positions when competent. C. W. LOOMIS, Waterbury, Conn.

**999 SONGS** Handb. bound **GIVEN AWAY.** Send stamp to ALBERT W. PHILLIPS, Publisher, Chicago, Ill.

**60** COMPLETE LOVE STORIES, 11 Thrilling Detective Stories, 100 Popular Songs and our large Illustrated Catalogue, FREE by mail for 10 cents to pay postage EXCELSIOR PTG. CO., Alexandria, Va.

**WANTED** Women to take Crochet work to do at home. Steady work. Write for particulars. L. WHITE & CO., 210 State St., Chicago, Ill.

**15** THE OLD-FASHIONED HUSKING BEE New and funny. Catalogue of plays, &c. free. C. Baker's, 23 Winter St., Boston, Mass.

**1892** Samples of Cards and Scrap FREE who write at once. GLOBE Wallingford, Conn.

**ALBUM** YOUR NAME On 25 Longs. 1000 cards for 1892. Ring a Watch Chain, 1 Pen, 25 Pcs. Trans. Souvenir, Verses, &c. Agent's Sample Book & Complete Credit, all 10c. IVY CARD CO., HAMDEN, CONN.

**ANYONE** who plays VIOLIN, GUITAR, BANJO, MANDOLIN, etc., or wishes to quickly learn, ad. C. A. LOHMAN, ST. LOUIS, MO.

**A BEAU** send 10c. for sealed package, to make your skin soft and white, or cure pimples, freckles, moth, wrinkles, &c. Warranted. F. H. BIRD, Box 124, Augusta, Maine.

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Dialogues, Speakers, for School, Club and Parlor. Catalogue free. T. S. BENISON, Publisher, Chicago.

**\$275** A MONTH, 75 best selling articles in the world. Sample Free. N. S. COWLEY, Detroit, Mich.

**CARDS & JEWELRY FREE!** Mammoth Catalogue & samples of Cards, Jewelry, Scrap Pictures &c. FREE. Send 5c. for postage and packing. MINTA CARD CO., Northfield, Conn.

**SHEET MUSIC** at regular prices. Send stamp for FREE catalogue of 200 pieces. J. W. LUSK & CO., Chicago.

**\$230** A MONTH. Agents Wanted. 90 best selling articles in the world. 1 sample FREE. Address N. A. MARSH, Detroit, Mich.

**FREE** 80 page catalogue. 1/2 prices on watches, jewelry, musical instruments, guns, pistols, etc. Write quick. A. C. Morris & Co. 167 Dearborn St., Chicago.

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**RUPTURE** A POSITIVE RADICAL CURE AT HOME. (Sealed) BOOK GIVING FULL PARTICULARS SENT FREE. Address DR. W. S. RICE, Box 6, Smithville, Tex. Co., New York.

**DISH** The greatest household article ever invented. Washes and rinses dishes perfectly in five minutes time. Splendid terms. Agents wanted. No competition. Blue circular free. The Geo. M. Rewell Co. 220 Cleveland, O.

**WASHER**

**BEST** PAYING THING for Agents is our PHOTOGRAPH FAMILY RECORD PICTURE. We give you liberal terms. Address Dept. Z C. CORY & CO., 51 & 53 Jefferson St., Chicago.

**MALE AND FEMALES** MAKE \$3 to \$5 A DAY at home working for us. Send your name on a postal card for particulars and Free Sample. Hobbs' Medicine Co., Chicago, Ill.

**TEN** lots, with name, or name, town & state, No. Selling Free. **NOT THE CHEAP KING** One who has not had letters & figures & makes any name, only 10c. AGENTS' LATEST GOODS. Stamps of all kinds. Rubber Stamp Co. Factory E 3, New Haven, Conn.

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**MUSIC BOOK** LEAF HOLDER. The best Holder out.

Nickel plated sample, with Agents terms, by mail. 50c. If not satisfactory money will be refunded. J. H. & J. Ferguson, Cedarville, O.

**EAGLE PRINTING OUTFIT** 15c. Three alphabets of type, type holder, bottle, ink, ink pad and tweezers; put up in a neat box with full instructions for use. EAGLE SUPPLY CO., New Haven, Conn.

**LADIES WANTED** to work for me on my parlor home employment, making light fancy goods. Can be done in leisure hours. Constant work, good pay. ADDRESS WITH STAMP: MANAGERESS, ART NEEDLEWORK BAZAAR, CHICAGO, ILL.

**VARICOCELE** Certain and rapid cure; no pain, no inconvenience, perfectly reliable; the best of references; new and certain method; sealed information FREE. L. S. FRANKLIN, Marshall, Mich.

**FREE** SEND 4 CENTS IN POSTAGE, a lock of your hair, name, age and sex and I will send you a confirmatory diagnosis of your disease free. Address DR. C. E. BATDORF, Mechanicsville, Iowa.

**\$50. A WEEK.** We want you to sell our self-filling, self-extinguishing Non Explosive LAMP BURNERS, sell at sight. To those meaning business, sample free. Exclusive territory given. PHOENIX Co., 22 Mechanic St., Newark, N. J.

**PARALYSIS** CURED without medicine. Rheumatism, Spinal Diseases and Dropsey easily cured. Add. Dr. C. I. THACHER, 6, Central Music Hall, Chicago, for a valuable book FREE to all.

**RHEUMATISM CURED.** Three Months Treatment with full directions sent by mail for ONE DOLLAR, or sample package of Medicine and particulars for 2-cent stamp. JACKSON MANUF'G. CO., COLUMBUS, O.

**DRUNK** SEENESS Cured in 5 days secretly by Dr. Bloom's discovery. Quickest cure in the world for the liquor habit. Particulars sent free. Address David Foote, Sole American Agent, Box 71, Colchester, Conn.

**ANY 3** of these Gem Panel PHOTOS Pres. H. Mrs. H. Baby McKee, Cleveland, Mrs. C. Depew, Blanche McKinley with PLAIN TALK, a 16 p. mo. 6 mos. 10c 25c. Sample photo 5 cts. PLAIN TALK CO., Box 5259 N. Y. City.

**GENUINE STANDARD SINGER** Sewing Machines. Latest improved. Best made. Noiseless. Waranted by SINGER MONEY \$35.00 Machine for \$9.50 now, \$16.00 " \$14.00 " \$18.00 " Complete set of attachments FREE. Adapted for light or heavy work. Light running. Nicely finished. Send for catalogue. CASH BUYERS' UNION, 255-266 Dearborn St. R. 76 Chicago.

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**EAR.** D. R. EVANS' PHOSPHOR OZONEIZED AIR cures deafness, Catarrh, Bubbling Noises, Foul Breath, Asthma and consumption. New method sent with apparatus to all parts. Explanatory pamphlet mailed free. DAVID EVANS, M. D., 226 Tremont Street, Boston.

"A great remedy—without doubt the greatest discovery of the age."—Boston Herald.

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**FREE** THE NEW AMERICAN MUSICAL BOX WILL PLAY 100 TUNES

WEIGHT 14 IN. LENGTH 19 IN. WIDTH 16 IN. HEIGHT 30 LBS.

To introduce them, one in every County or town furnish reliable persons (either sex) who will promise to show it. EXCELSIOR MUSIC BOX CO., Box 1216, N. Y. City.

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## SILK SATIN &amp; PLUSH REMNANTS

for Fancy Patch, a large quantity of various colors, 10c. per yard. 10c. a pair. All colors Embroidery Silk Etc. These Paper Flowers, how to make, samples of paper and price-list of material, 10c. Ladies Art Co., Box 244 E. St. Louis, Ill.

**FREE** A Solid GOLD WATCH

to every reader of this advertisement who will aid us in increasing our sales. The **FAMILY CIRCLE** is one of the largest and brightest Home papers published.

To rapidly increase the subscription list we will give away these watches.

These watches have handwound engraved cases, made of two heavy plates of 18 K. GOLD, over compo-

sition, and are warranted to never move, expand or contract.

They come in a leather case, stem wind and set, and are warranted to never move, expand or contract.

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They come in a leather case, stem wind





Genius Versus Hardwork.

We this month present this short sketch on "Genius Versus Hard work," as it makes a good preface to some very interesting illustrated articles on the millionaires of N. Y. and other cities that we are now having written up to appear exclusively in COMFORT. Sketches in the career of Russell Sage, Jay Gould, the Vanderbilts, Astors, Rockefellers, Morgans, and other prominent wealthy men are always interesting and our articles will be made especially attractive and helpful as guides to the young who have their mark to make in the world.

Let no young man be cast down because in the fullness of his own observation he has reached the conclusion that he is an ordinary man, and that he is without genius. Though "The Century's" admirable dictionary defines genius as the possession of phenomenal intellectual capacity, we have the authority of Sydney Smith, W. D. Howells, Chas. Dickens, and Abraham Lincoln that genius is but another name for the results of patient and incessant labor. That there are instances to the contrary is not to be doubted, but generally speaking, the life of all truly great men has been the life of intense and incessant labor. Edmund Burke was in early life a struggling lawyer, and his first work of any importance "On the Sublime and Beautiful" is a treatise but little importance, and was characterized by Macaulay as being as dry as a parliamentary report. Yet Mr. Burke was the most laborious and indefatigable of human beings, and the time came when the resources of his immense intellectual powers were to be displayed. The great hall of William Rufus, the hall which had echoed to the inaugurations of thirty kings; the hall which had seen the just sentence of Baon, and where Charles had confronted the High Court of Justice with that placid courage which has half redeemed his fame, became the scene of his greatest triumph, when he was intrusted with the impeachment of Warren Hastings.

"Therefore," said he, "hath it with all confidence been ordered by the Commons of Great Britain that I impeach Warren Hastings on high crimes and misdemeanors. I impeach him in the name of the Common's House of Parliament whose trust he has betrayed. I impeach him in the name of the English nation whose ancient honor he has sullied, and I impeach him in the name of the people of India, whose rights he has trodden underfoot, and whose country he has turned into a desert, and in the name of human nature itself in the name of both sexes, in the name of every age, in the name of every rank, I impeach the common enemy and offender of all."

This sounds like genius, yet the results of long course of study and profound thinking are plainly discernible. Hard work is at the bottom of it.



LINCOLN'S EARLY HOME.

Abraham Lincoln studied while he split rails. Grant learned the hard work necessary to success in a country tanner. Daniel Webster knew the heights possible to the young man of application. Godfrey William Liebritz, the great German mathematician and philosopher, was never out of his study, and Blaise Pascal, the eminent French writer on geometry, killed himself by overwork. John Milton was at his "Paradise Lost" with the same regularity that a business man pursues his vocation, and Raphael fell a victim to his incessant toll at the early age of thirty-seven.

Thus it is that when the fruit of labor suddenly bursts forth in all its dazzling splendor, that the unthinking cry out, "Another phenomenon! 'A wonderful genius!'" Born to make his mark, etc. The long weary years of patient toil are lost sight of—the man has sprung into being without the formality of babyhood. He has entered the arena an acknowledged champion!

No one talks in that way except the unthinking. Position is not easily won, nor is it more easily held. There is more room at the top, but the merry war is there just the same. The successful competitor instead of trusting to his own single mind has ransacked the accumulated treasures of the ages, and every intellectual gift of nature however insignificant is capable of the same development as a reward of the same effort.

It might be a comfort to many a young man to know that there is no height to which he may not aspire; that there is no position which he may not occupy, and the bigger the prize the bigger the price. And to quote a homely but terse epigram from Mr. George Eastman, inventor of Kodak cameras, who is himself an illustration of what hard work can do, we remark in closing, "More men die from bummery than from hard work."

**VARICOCELE!** I was quickly cured! Will send Cure, sealed, FREE! L. C. HOWARD, Marshall, Mich.

**INGROWING NAILS.** An infallible remedy. Mail \$1 to H. M. RICH, Box 52, Balto., Md.

**Dandruff, Itching Piles & Rheumatic Killers.** 25c. (silver) each. Write for particulars. J. C. Caldwell, 31 Colony St. Lynn, Mass.

**SWIM** you are in it if you send 25 cents for Ladies Patent Hair Pin, a new thing. A harvest for Agents. H. L. STONE SUPPLY CO., Augusta, Maine.

**DID WE WIN THE BATTLE?** Is the title of a New Patriotic Song with music and sentiments of Battle of Gettysburg, etc. J. F. Chase, Augusta, Me.

**50** SILK FRINGED PAN, ENVELOPE, FANCY Shape and Acquaintance Cards, (Name on each) 10 cents. 500 Samples of Silk Ribbon, Silk Fringe, Rosette Cards, Prints, Games, Songs and Agents' Cards. Quilt for 1825, 4 oz. CROWN CARD CO., CADIZ, OHIO.

**20** Hidden Name, New Emb. Basket, Plush Fringe 25 Cards, 1 complete Fountain Pen—25 Games & Apts. Outfit 10cts. Typewriter and Photo Cameras free to Apts. Clinton Bros. Clintonville, Ct.

Pkg. silk necktie remnants, \$ .20 Our price for nice pkg. embroidery silk, \$ .15 lot 10 cents, Sunnyside 6 months, \$ .15 Sunnyside, Box 10; Augusta, Me. \$ .50

**BEATTY'S** ORGANS, PIANOS \$35 up. Write for Catalogue. Address Dan'l F. Beatty, Washington, N. J.

## OPIUM or Morphine Habit Cured at Home. Trial Free. No Pain. Comp'd Oxygen Ass'n, Ft. Wayne, Ind.

### AN OWL BACH!

We will send you a FRINGED LINEN TIDY of "AN OWL BACH," Floss to work it, INGALLS' BOOK OF STITCHES. Ingalls' 32-page Illustrated Catalogue of FANCY WORK MATERIALS, STAMPED GOODS, ART BOOKS, STAMPING OUTFITS, etc.; also a SAMPLE COPY of INGALLS' HOME AND ART MAGAZINE, ALL for ten 2c stamps (20 cents). J. F. INGALLS, LYNN, MASS.



### Our System the Best.

**WE PAY THE FREIGHT.** We want reliable women in every town to sell \$6.00 worth of Teas, Spices, Baking Powders, Extracts and Perfumes for us, and get a Set of Silver Knives and Forks free, or \$10.00 worth, and get a Set of China Dishes free, or a cash commission of 40 per cent. will be given. No money required until you deliver goods and receive your premium. Address W. W. THOMAS, CINCINNATI, O.



CUT THIS OUT

### LOVELY FACES, WHITE HANDS.

Nothing will WHITEN and CLEAR the skin so quickly as

### Derma-Royale

The new discovery for dissolving and removing discolorations from the cuticle, and bleaching and brightening the complexion. In experimenting in the laundry with a new bleach for fine fabrics it was discovered that all spots, freckles, tan and other discolorations were quickly removed from the hands and arms without the slightest injury to the skin. The discovery was submitted to experienced Dermatologists and Physicians who prepared for us the formula of the marvelous Derma-Royale. THERE NEVER WAS ANYTHING LIKE IT. It is perfectly harmless and so simple a child can use it. Apply at night—the improvement apparent after a single application will surprise and delight you. It quickly dissolves and removes the worst forms of moth-patches, brown or liver spots, freckles, black-heads, blotches, sallowness, redness, tan and every discoloration of the cuticle. One bottle completely removes and cures the most aggravated cases and thoroughly clears, whitens and beautifies the complexion. It has never failed—it CANNOT FAIL. It is highly recommended by Physicians and its effectual and sure results warrant us in offering

**\$500 REWARD.** To assure the public of its merit we agree to forfeit Five Hundred Dollars cash, for any case of moth-patches, brown spots, liver spots, black-heads, ugly or muddy skin, unnatural redness, freckles, tan or any other cutaneous discolorations (excepting birth marks, scars, and those of a cancerous nature) that Derma-Royale will not quickly remove and cure. We also agree to forfeit Five Hundred Dollars to any person whose skin can be injured in the slightest possible manner, or for any complexion (no matter in how bad condition it may be), that the use of Derma-Royale will not clear, whiten, improve and beautify.

\* **EVERY BOTTLE GUARANTEED.** \* AGENTS—Special Inducements Offered—AGENTS

Derma-Royale sent by mail, in patent mailing boxes, postage prepaid, (securely sealed from observation) on receipt of price, **\$1. per bottle.** Send money by registered letter or money order with your post-office address written plainly. Correspondence sacredly private. Postage stamps received as cash. Address THE DERMA-ROYALE CO., Corner Baker and Vine Streets, CINCINNATI, OHIO.

MENTION THIS PAPER

## VIGOROUS HEALTH can be had by using

DR. JACOB'S

NERVE AND BRAIN TREATMENT for mental and bodily weakness of every kind. Cures guaranteed. Address with stamp.

JACOB'S PHARMACY CO., ATLANTA, GA.



### A BIG OFFER

50c. MADE IN A MINUTE! It will hang up in the P. O., or some public place, the two show bills that we send, we will give you a 50c. cert., and send it in advance with samples and bills. This will trouble you about one minute, and then if you want to work on salary at \$5.50 or \$100 per month, let us know. **We pay in advance.**

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## OLIVE'S LOVERS.

**Marry him?** Well, I suppose I shall have to, or else lose all the money; and what is love without money, Jack? How I wish something would happen, but I have very little hope left.

She stops short, as if she has said all there is to be said, and pours herself another cup of tea.

"You speak as if it were a pleasure—the having to marry him I mean," says the young man on the opposite side the small table.

"Why deal so mysteriously in pronouns, Jack, dear? And why not call Mr. Carroll by his name?"

"Simply because I detest his name, himself, and everything belonging to him," Jack Dering says savagely.

"Then you hate me, too, for I in a measure belong to him."

"That you do not, and never shall, if I can prevent it. Olive, is there no way out of it?"

"I'm afraid not, Jack, and after all, money is a power."

"Quite true, but what is money, what is anything, without love?"

"Aunt Janet says that when poverty comes in at the door, love flies out at the window," Olive says pensively.

"But, Olive, child, I am not the pauper you think me. I have three hundred a year."

"And I, if I marry Duke Carroll, will have an income of thirty thousand a year."

"I wish you were not so mercenary, Olive," he says, reproachfully. "A true, loving heart is worth more to a woman than all the wealth of the world, and so you will find when it is too late."

"Oh, Jack, how can you think so badly of me? You know that I love you better than any one in the wide world; but I fear that Aunt Janet will never give her consent to our marriage. Are you going already, Jack?"

"It is good-bye for a little time, my dear Olive. I am off to town by the 4:30 express."

Another ten minutes is consumed in good-byes, and then Jack is gone. When his footsteps die away the love light fades quickly from the girl's eyes.

"It is a most cruel will," she says aloud. "Why should Uncle Timothy condemn me to marry a man whom I have never seen, in order to inherit his wretched money? As for Duke Carroll, I am fully prepared to hate him."

"A most unwise conclusion," says a quiet voice from the doorway, where Miss Merton stands.

"Oh, Auntie, did you hear me? Well, it's the truth at any rate."

"Where is your schoolboy lover?" Miss Janet inquires. "I see you have been feeding him on bread and butter and tea, a most proper diet for boys of his age."

"Poor Jack," Olive says mournfully.

"Poor Jack, indeed," cries Miss Janet. "He took anything but deserving of pity when I saw him just now, with his hat perched on one side his head, and whistling some absurd tune."

"You are hard upon Jack, Auntie; he looks upon the bright side of things."

"There is no bright side in his case. He has no right to drag you down into a life of poverty: you who have been reared so tenderly."

"But, Auntie, love is more than everything else together."

"Silly child! ease and comfort are more to be sought after—so you will think when it is too late. Years of toil and privation are not calculated to heighten any woman's charms, and so your husband would tell you, after you had sacrificed the best years of your life for his comfort."

"That is so unlike Jack, he would never speak so to any woman, least of all to the woman he loved."

"Your faith is beautiful, my dear. May you keep it, all I have to say, and with a short like a war-horse. Miss Janet leaves the room, with her colors flying in triumph."

During the sad days that follow, Jack's strange silence puzzles the girl sorely. He had promised so faithfully to write, yet a month goes by, and she receives no tidings of her absent lover.

Ah, if she only knew the fate of those tender, loving letters that Jack Dering pens daily for a time, and that somehow find their way unopened into Miss Merton's kitchen fire when Olive happens to be out sketching in the pretty wood, or away with Prince on her morning ramble.

"It is only what I expected, child," she says day after day. "There is nothing in the world so unstable as a young man's fancy. No doubt Jack Dering has forgotten your very existence by this time."

Olive will not trust herself to reply, but runs from the house out into the garden, her golden curls all dishevelled, and straight into the arms of a remarkably handsome young man who is coming leisurely up the garden path.

"I beg your pardon," Olive cries, flushing hotly.

"It is yours," he returns graciously. "You are Miss Merton's niece?" he goes on.

"I am Olive Trenwith and Miss Merton is my aunt."

"Allow me to introduce myself. I am Marmaduke Carroll."

In an instant Olive's smile freezes.

"Will you walk in, sir?" she asks coldly. "No doubt Auntie will be delighted to see you," and with a curt bow of dismissal, she leaves him standing hat in hand in the middle of the garden path, her usually charming manners forgotten.

With a low whistle of surprise Duke Carroll watches the slender figure out of sight, and then pursues his way indoors, where he meets with a most delightful welcome from Miss Merton. She is eloquent in her praise of the stranger that evening when she and Olive are alone.

Each day brings Mr. Carroll to the cottage, and each day the girl looks in vain for a letter. No letter! the words fall like the voice of doom on her throbbing heart. No letter! she hears it in feverish dreams and lies continually from its hissing.

Only those who have known what it is to stake their hopes on a sheet of letter paper, who have wakened at dawn counting the hours that must go by till the mail is due, working diligently to murder time till that hour rolls round to send a messenger in hot haste, to listen for the sound of returning footsteps, to meet him at the door with outstretched hands, and receive—no letter! only those who have writhed on this rack know the misery of such days. These are the trials that plough wrinkles in smooth girlish brows, that harden the outline of soft rosy lips, that sicken the weary soul and teach women deception.

Olive knew that both her aunt and Duke Carroll watched her closely, and behind the mask of gay, rapid words and ringing, mirthless laughter, she tried to hide her suffering.

One day she obtains a late copy of the "Times," which Duke brings to them occasionally. Instinctively she glances at the list headed "Marriages," and then, oh! heaven help her, her very heart seems to cease its pulsation. She stands motionless a moment, but the walls of the room spin around like maple leaves in an autumn gale.

"Can it be true? Was Aunt Janet right after all, and is there no truth, no love in the world?"

Coming into the room sometime later Miss Merton finds her niece prone upon the floor, the paper grasped tightly in her death-cold hand. When she has restored the girl to con-

sciousness she grasps the "Times" and reads eagerly, almost joyfully, Olive thinks, the following paragraph:

## MARRIED.

On Nov. 19th at St. John's Episcopal Church, John M. Dering and Irene Clifton, all of Boston. The happy couple will leave the city immediately on an extended tour of Europe.

That same evening Duke Carroll strolls into the small drawing-room, unannounced, where Olive is sitting all alone in the firelight, playing softly on the old worn-out piano that sounds an unpleasant jingle in the treble.

"Will you sing me just one song, Olive?" he says pleadingly.

One by one she turns over her songs, then selects one, and begins to sing in her rich, tender contralto, "Tears, idle tears." As she rises from the piano Duke clasps her hands in his, and says eagerly:

"Olive, shall I tell you what lies next my heart? I came here to-night to ask you to be my wife, have you no word for me, Olive?"

She turns from him and says calmly:

"I do not love you, Duke, and if I marry you, it will be for wealth and position."

"So be it," he says, almost solemnly. "Such love as mine must create a return some time. I will leave you now, Olive, and come again in the morning to talk the matter over with Miss Merton. Good-night, my darling."

Olive gives him an unwilling hand, and in another moment he is gone.

Miss Merton looses no time in having the approaching marriage duly chronicled in the city papers and it is here that Jack Dering first sees it, as he sits alone in his bachelor apartments in town, pondering for the hundredth time over Olive's strange conduct, in not replying to his letters.

"Women are all alike the world over," he says scornfully, flinging the paper to one side. "Well, about the best thing I can do, will be to accept Uncle John's offer, and the position he offers me, as private secretary. I will go abroad with a bridal party after all, and try to forget there is such a thing as love in the world!"

Time rolls on, summer is casting down her crown of flowers, the reapers are busy in the fields, and to-morrow is Olive's wedding day. Above stairs the snowy silk, the lace veil, the fragrant orange blossoms, are all in readiness. Duke, who has gone to the city, is expected home by the evening train, but as the hours go by and he comes not, Miss Janet frets and fumes herself almost into a fever of impatience.

"Something awful must have happened, Olive," she says for the twentieth time.

Something awful has happened. Duke Carroll, lost in blissful dreams of the future, that fancy paints in such glowing colors, seated in a luxuriously furnished compartment of the home bound train, is rudely awakened by a succession of shrill sounds, which indicate that the engineer is either frightened or frantic. The conductor dashes bareheaded through the car; people spring to their feet, then a shock, as if the day of doom has dawned, a crash, and all is chaos!

Viewed by the aid of lanterns and the lurid, flickering light of torches, the scene of disaster presents a ghastly debris of dead and dying, of crushed, ears and wounded men and women, who writhe and groan among the shattered timbers from which they find it impossible to extricate themselves. The cries of those who recognize relatives in the mutilated corpses who are dragged out from the wreck, increase the horrors of the occasion.

Duke Carroll lies between two timbers, one of which has fallen across his feet and crushed them. Another has fallen on his head, while one arm is pinioned to his side. His lips are pinched and purple, the white lids lie rigid over the laughing blue eyes, his hands are stiff and icy. He is quite dead when they find him, some hours later, when a group of men with axes in their hands bend down and look into his face. Dead—and to-morrow his wedding day!

They bring him home and lay him to rest in the old family vault, the burial place of the Carrolls.

Olive wears mourning for the man who so nearly became her husband, though in her heart she is not sorry to be free and mistress of thirty thousand a year.

A year passes quietly away, with its summer flowers, autumn beauty, and winter snow. Olive is a great heiress now, and accompanied by Aunt Janet, has improved the time in travel.

Just now they are stopping at a well known hotel near Chicago, for Miss Merton has declared it absolutely necessary to her niece's health to obtain at least a few weeks' rest after the round of summer gayeties.

"Remember, Olive," she says, raising a warning finger, "it is to be rest, absolutely."

"I do hope it will not be too dull," sighs Olive. "If only a few nice people whom we know could be with us, Auntie."

Things were dull enough in truth at the country hotel, until Saturday came, bringing with it a crowd of men from the city.

Miss Merton and Olive go down to dinner together that night, and are both considerably shocked to find Jack Dering standing in the hall giving directions concerning his luggage.

It is too late to retreat, and there is nothing for it but a mutual recognition, a tight hand clasp, a smile, a bow, and it is all over. All over, while Olive tells herself that in spite of everything, she loves this handsome Jack as she never loved him in the past.

"We must leave this place to-morrow, Auntie," she whispers pleadingly. "You will not mind?"

"Certainly, my dearest," Aunt Janet says kindly.

Perhaps she feels at times some slight remorse at her share in the girl's unhappy past, for she has been doubly kind and thoughtful since Marmaduke Carroll's tragic death and collapse of her long cherished scheme of seeing Olive his wife.

It is the 27th of October, dinner is at an end, and tired of strolling in the grounds and gardens so softly perfumed by the night flowers, most of the party pass into the lighted parlors, while Jack Dering and several other gentlemen linger outside on the balcony to finish their cigars.

"Miss Trenwith sing something for us tonight," Mrs. Beauchamp says coaxingly. "Anything you like, only sing."

"Do not ask me," Olive objects languidly. "It is so long since I have sung that I scarcely know any song correctly."

"Break down if you will, only sing for us," says someone else.

"Do, Miss Trenwith," says Jack.

He has come in through the open window, and something in his tone strikes Miss Janet as being odd. He is looking eagerly, fixedly at Olive. Will she refuse this unexpected request of his? Olive raises to his a face smiling, but pale.

"Well, yes, I will sing you something," she says, and strikes a few lingering chords. Then she begins.

"I linger round the very spot

Where years ago we met,

And wonder when you quite forgot,

Or if you quite forgot,

And tender yearnings rise anew

For love that used to be.

If you could know that I was true,

And I that you were free.

Love once again, meet me once again.

Old love is waking, shall it wake in vain?"

As she comes to the last line a wild sadness mingles with her tone. When she has finished they are all silent. The moonlight, streaming across the carpet, rebukes the soft radiance of the lamps. Pushing aside the curtains with one hand, Jack says in a low, determined tone:

"Miss Trenwith, will you come and see how the gardens look by moonlight?"

"Yes, if you wish it," she says, letting the words fall from her lips with singular sweetness.

"I am so glad," exclaims Miss Janet plaintively, when they are out of hearing. "Now I hope they will marry each other, and bring their little comedy to a close."

For long since, without Miss Janet's aid, had the girl discovered her terrible mistake in supposing that it was her Jack who had married. But still there were many things to be explained away during that long happy hour in the chill October moonshine. Among others, the missing letters. At last, Jack manages to hint his suspicions to Olive, and though it causes her gentle heart another pang to accept Aunt Janet's guilt as a hard fact, it is too plain to mistake. She yields to his opinion in everything, just as in the old day, for who could resist Jack's eyes, or Jack's outstretched arms? Olive never pretended to, so that is why her golden head found such a speedy resting place upon his broad shoulder.

"This past year has been a weary one to me, Jack," she whispers presently.

"But it is over now, Olive, darling. Let us look forward and not backward. Please God there are many years of happiness in store for us yet. Truly, there is no joy so complete as that which succeeds sorrow—no happiness so sweet as that which follows upon misery."

And what do you suppose Aunt Janet gave her niece and nephew for a bridal present? quite out of keeping, you will say, with the grand display of diamonds, gold and silver and crystal that dazzled the eyes of those fortunate enough to be invited, a year's subscription to COMFORT!

"For," as she remarked to her dear, five hundred friends, "as I have always said, though Olive would never believe me, there is nothing so desirable as comfort in this world of ours. I trust the dear child may be happy after all." And so she was.

"All was ended now, the hope, the fear, and the sorrow.

All the aching of heart, the restless, unsatisfied longing,

All the dull deep pain—

And the constant anguish of patience!

GEORGE LEE BRUCE.

She was a veritable madcap—a hoyden—and gave me more trouble than any two boys in the school. Yet she was a bright pupil when she would learn. There were a good many rough and turbulent lads among the pupils of the Scraggleville public school, but I soon reduced these to obedience. The summary measures I took with these, however, I could not take with my hoydenish pupil, Wild Rose Maybell, as she was called on account of her madcap disposition. One cannot thrash a girl very well, and so Wild Rose rather had the advantage of me. But matters soon reached a point where I was compelled to take the girl in hand and talk to her like a "Dutch Uncle." Her conduct became outrageous, and indeed encouraged by her companions and my hitherto lenient treatment of her, she set my authority at defiance. I called her up to the desk one morning and stated matters to her plainly. I showed her how she was wasting the golden hours of youth in senseless idling and mischief and that she ought to be more industrious. But, of course, my fatherly advice fell on deaf ears, and when I threatened her with corporal punishment she laughed defiantly.

"You wouldn't dare tickle me," she said, her eyes sparkling with anger. "My pa 'ud tickle you to death if you teched me. So there."

And the little spitfire looked so handsome as she faced me in defiance that I felt more like throwing my arms around her and kissing her than beating her.

But I restrained myself and told her to bear what I had said in mind. Although Wild Rose was a favorite of mine I meant what I had said and was determined to punish her if she did not mend her ways. But she did not do so, and, after she had been unusually mischievous I called her up one day and administered to her a good rattanning.

She was very much chagrined and vowed that she would tell her "pa," and she must have done so, for next morning before school opened I was waited upon by a strapping backwoodsman—a rough, grizzled pioneer in hickory shirt and cowhide boots, who without further ceremony introduced himself as Sam Maybell, father of my pupil, Wild Rose, and wanted to know what I meant by beating his daughter. I explained to him that what I had done had been only done in my position as schoolmaster, and for the girl's good, and that I had a perfect right to do it. But the bull-headed fellow would listen to no explanation at all, and at once went in "to clean me out" as he expressed it. He aimed a blow at me which I parried and soon we were hotly engaged, for my blood was up at the fellow's conduct and I was determined to give him a good thrashing.

I was a fairly good boxer and wrestler and I soon discovered that my opponent possessed none of these athletic accomplishments, relying wholly on brute strength to defeat me.

Around the school-room we wrestled and fought, overturning the desk in our struggle. Blows were freely exchanged. Finally we clinched and tripping him up, we fell to the floor with a crash that shook the schoolhouse. I regained my feet immediately but my antagonist did not. He lay motionless where he had fallen, his face colorless, and a tiny stream trickling from his head.



The letters—10, 6, 8, 3, 2;  
When you conquer the TOTAL, recite it,  
'Tis a "birthday poem," for you.  
Etna, Ohio.

LINE.

No. 251. Numerical.  
"Hello! my friend," 2, 8, 5 said,  
As they met in the village store;  
"Remember the bet with me you made,  
That you would chew no more."

"What makes you spit and spit away?  
Have you to chew begun?  
You 3, 11, 4 must say—  
Ha! Ha! the bet I've won."

He replied, with a 7, 6, 9 and a grin,  
"Oh no, 10, 1 on my soul,  
For a cold I took some medicine,  
In mistake, I took a WHOLE.  
Gouldsboro Sta., Pa.

ARTHUR.

No. 252. Double Letter Enigma.  
In "lofty cone,"  
In "purer tone,"  
In "warmer zone."  
The FIRST is one of worthless chaps;  
The WHOLE, an evening bell.  
The LAST, "not many;" and, perhaps—  
But this is all I'll tell.

Wataga, Ills.,  
OLD PETE.

No. 253. Double Letter Enigma.  
In "ocean so blue;"  
In "jacket so new;"  
In "battery's guns;"  
In "jokers' puns."  
Perhaps you'll guess it,  
When you are told,  
My WHOLE is worth  
Its weight in gold.  
Montpelier, Ohio,

JEW V. NILE.

No. 254. Crossword.  
In porter not in beer,  
In mind not in hear;  
In table not in chair,  
In cat not in bear;  
In safety not in danger,  
In barn not in manger;  
In yours not in mine,  
In theirs not in thine;  
In thoughtful not in witty,  
Whole is an Easter city.  
Washington, Pa.

WILL.

No. 255. Guillotination.

1. Guillotine sentiment, and have a wing; 2. A frame of wood, and have certain serpents; 3. Directed, and leave puffed up; 4. To correct, and leave to hurry; 5. To contract, and have exact; 6. Limited, and have tinged; 7. Contract, and have a dead; 8. Educated, and have deserved; 9. A large stable, and have a groom.

Guillotined letters form a friend of the "Mystic Krewe."

Belton, Tex., BLACK EYED CHARLEY.

No. 256. Christmas Anagram.

They SAY I HOLD ONE OF THE—what?  
Yes, what do they say that I hold?  
It may be of greenbacks, a lot,  
Or purse of pure nickels or gold.

My uncles and cousins, all gay  
And wealthy, are coming to see  
Our folks on next Christmas day,  
And jolly as larks will we be.

Christmas is TOTAL, no doubt,  
And we'll dress in our best, every one.  
And with laughter, and romping and shout,  
We'll have our full quantum of fun.

The presents all costly and rare,

We'll enjoy, and as treasures lay in;  
But we'll give to the needy a share,  
And thus their good will, will we win.

They SAY I HOLD ONE OF THE charms,  
And truly, when kindness we show,  
Joy follows and blesses our aims,  
And dispels every shadow of woe.

Dubois, Ills., ASPIRO.

No. 257. Square.

1. System of government. 2. A certain instrument. 3. Show. 4. A titanic iron ore. 5. Measuring. 6. A genus of plants.

Bangor, Pa., T. HINKER.

No. 258. Pentagon.

1. A letter. 2. One who deserts his party. 3. Spoke with hesitation. 4. Games of chance. 5. Depressed in spirits. 6. Babbling. 7. Discourses at great length. 8. More valuable. 9. Receptacles of numbers.

Philadelphia, Pa., NYPHO.

No. 259. Hexagon.

1. To range or wander over. 2. An ancient Italian language. 3. A genus of leguminous trees and shrubs. 4. A character in Shakespeare. 5. A method of ornamenting metal plates. 6. A volume of plates. 7. An army.

Oswego, N. Y., VENUS.

No. 260. Half Square.

1. A letter. 2. A prefix denoting with. 3. To put on. 4. Bark. 5. A carnivorous animal. 6. Disgusting. 7. Stems of the calamus. 8. To loathe. 9. One who complies. 10. Certain vessels.

San Francisco, Cal., J. C. M.

No. 261. Charade.

(By sound.)  
'Twas a "Mystic Castle," in mystic lands,  
And a mystic spell was round it;

There were mystic bundles and a mystic roll,  
And a mystic string that bound it;

And an old man sat in a high back chair,

Whose locks were grizzly and gray.

He'd wandered away across the LAST,

And he'd searched for many a day,

To gather thus, fully, his mystic store,

For the TOTAL time drew near,

When many are glad and FIRST delight,

To receive his welcome cheer,

For the mystic spell brings a mystic joy,

And a mystic word for all,

From "The Mystic Castle" of mystic lands;

Long live its mystic thrall.

Long live its mystic thrall.

Binghampton, N. Y., FRANTZ.

No. 262. Charade.

One day a rare old gentleman  
Called at my father's house,

And I, as erst I had been taught.

Kept still as any mouse.

At last my father introduced

The gentleman to me;

He asked a question, "Can you *flexit?*"

I answered, I *two three*.

The whole's a name in an old play,

Writ years and years ago;

"The rehearsal" and a braggart he

Spares neither friend nor foe.

Providence, R. I., RAY.

No. 263. Prize Diamond.

1. A letter. 2. Old times, (poetic). 3. A country in Asia. 4. To form with scales. 5. A noted puzzler's *nom de plume*. 6. Interval. 7. To vary. 8. A shade tree. 9. A letter.

Worcester, Mass., DOC.

No. 264. Diamond.

1. A letter. 2. Sorrowful. 3. One who hates. 4. An inclosure, on or near which the mansion house stands. 5. A native of Samaria. 6. Water-ousels. 7. Raved as a mad-man. 8. Revoltes. 9. Receives. 10. A male nickname. 11. A letter.

Poultney, Vt., GUARDINEER.

No. 265. Pentagon.

1. A consonant. 2. An electrical unit. 3. Went astray. 4. Low-growing plants, with purple flowers. 5. A church festival. 6. A colorless liquid resembling turpentine. 7. A lord's manor place. 8. An Indian brave. 9. Ozzy.

Worcester, Mass., DOC.

No. 266. Pentagonal.

1. A year's subscription to COMFORT. 2. Six-month's subscription to COMFORT. 3. Multum in Parvo Songster.

Specials.—Among all sending four or more solutions, will be awarded first, a six-month's subscription to COMFORT; second, Carl's Treasure Cabinet; third, Dime Savings Bank.

Solutions must be received prior to Feb. 1, 1892, to be acknowledged in March "Mystic Castle."

No. 249. A Christmas Box.

Made from 40, 5, 29, 73, 92, 96, 57, 100. Trimmed with 82, 71, 46, 11, 2, 37, 58, 81, 90, 62, 88, 18, 15, 27, 72, 6.

Lined with 95, 41, 56, 71, 54, 98, 51, 85, 33, 38, 81, 49, 22. The bottom is 44, 69, 87, 45, 51, 64, 98, 7, 17.

The back is 83, 67, 51, 77.

The front is 50, 75, 9, 30, 31, 19, 27, 72.

The cover is 21, 96, 3, 93, 5.

The end is 61, 84, 95, 54, 25.

The pattern is 79, 39, 67, 45, 65, 55, 95, 86, 13, 20.

The box contains 76, 85, 99, 5, 1, 24, 79, 6, 26, 97, 48,

8, 10, 70, 19, 14, 36, 60, 89, 79, 68, 94, 18, 82, 52, 45, 3,

30, 24, 61, 14, 54, 28, 76, 79, 15, 93, 35.

Let us sing *whole*, our song of praise,

On this, the king of holidays,

Hopkinsville, Ky., DELIAN.

No. 150. Numerical.

I have heard of an edible seaweed,"

Its name—5, 9, 3, 1, 7, 4; Leather-colored, grows under the water;

Of that, I will tell you no more.

The "back-bone of an animal," look for

**\$90 A MONTH, EXPENSES ADVANCED**  
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Something new for the children. It has a musical chime which will play if the cart is drawn forward or pushed backward. The music is similar to BARNUM'S CALLIOPE. The handle is three feet long, but not shown for want of space. A nice Christ mas present for only 50 cents.

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